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Gleanings from English Prose

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Gleanings from English Prose

GLEANINGS FROM ENGLISH PROSE

INTRODUCTION.

I

Gleanings from English Prose is an anthology of choice prose-readings in English literature starting from Edmund Burke in the eighteenth century and ending with G. K. Chesterton in the twentieth. English prose was given its modern form and mould by writers who lived at the beginning of the eighteenth century and, through it, by Addison and Steele, Swift and Goldsmith, Gibbon, Johnson and Burke. The latest prose style represented in this selection is that of writers like Arnold Bennett, G. K. Chesterton and Earl Baldwin. We have also ventured to include addresses by two eminent Indians, the Right Hon'ble Mr. M. R. Jayakar and Sir S. Radhakrishnan.

The inclusion of Indian writers may strike some as a new departure. But we think it will have served its purpose, if it brings home to the young Indian student that there are a few among their compatriots who know how to handle the English language with as much mastery of thought and phrase as those who are to the manner born. Besides, the subject-matter of their addresses is of special importance to the Indian student who may be called upon, later, as an educated man to play his part in the public life of his country. And in this respect the Indian leader

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of thought and action fills the rôle of a guide better than the foreigner. This is the purpose that these addresses are meant to serve, with their wide appeal, their catholicity of thought and sentiment, and their large outlook on life as a whole.

Burke represents the finest flower of eighteenth century English prose style, weighted with political thought and wisdom which have made him a classic for all later generations of thinkers as well as statesmen. Chesterton at the other end writing on Charles Dickens is a model of Saxon English, with humour, paradox, romance and sound common sense lighting up whatever he touches with his magic pen. Between the two are to be found writers known to all lovers of English literature, Charles Lamb, De Quincey, Dickens, Ruskin, Carlyle, Emerson, Newman and Walter Bagehot. The subject matter of their compositions is as varied as it is thought-provoking. They treat of topics that come home to the business and bosom of men. Who does not want to know about war and its effects? Who would not be interested in a discourse on Charles Dickens? Who would not learn from Macaulay the secret of true oratory? Who would not take lessons from De Quincey on the abiding and the ephemeral in literature or seek to know and feel the tonic power in literature? Walter Bagehot writes of Cobden as a sensitive agitator, Carlyle discourses on biography, and Lamb reveals to us the blessings of convalescence. Newman, in his inimitable manner, takes us on a pilgrimage to the ancient past of Western civilization and shows how learning, alone, preserved in monasteries, proved its salvation. And Baldwin, with his intimate knowledge of politics and public opinion, stresses for us the need of political educa-

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tion. Last, Arnold Bennett teaches us the secret of literary taste and how to form it.

The pieces chosen range over a long period of time and are gleaned from many fields. But disconnected as they are, it is hoped they are not without a clue. And they are all specimens of English prose style with individual charm and grace, force and strength, with a wide sweep of thought and marked by a telling phrase that is all their own. Their individual peculiarities are pointed out in this introduction in its proper place. Suffice it to say here that they are chosen for serious study and not for intellectual trifling. Simple writing implies hard reading, and hard reading pre-supposes select and thoughtful reading. It is for this purpose that these gleanings are made and the golden sheaf offered to the student. Would that he makes good use of it for his own intellectual nourishment, so that he becomes not a prig but a true scholar with a healthy and wide outlook on literature and life, and with a standard of taste ingrained in his mind that will enable him to keep away for good from the tinsel in style and the flippant in thought and speech.

II

If we are required to answer off-hand the question, "What is the function of a prose-writer?", most of us would say: "So long as he makes his meaning plain, he has done all that should be expected of him."

This view is right so far as it goes. But it doesn't go far enough. Literature, we must admit, is, in the final analysis, a thing of art; and, whether the medium of expression be prose or poetry, the literary artist should in the end create beauty. The quality of plainness alone

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will not enable a literary artist to achieve the noble and glorious ideal of "raising the plain towards the top-level of the peaks". "Literature," remarks Arnold Bennett, "exists so that where one man has lived finely ten thousands may afterwards live finely. It is a means of life ; it concerns the living essence."

In fact, the function of the prose-writer is threefold. It is "to express his meaning clearly, to use appropriate language, and to give lasting pleasure." It would not do merely to say that the function of prose is "simplicity and plainness." For, as it has been pointed out by A. C. Ward, the words have not only a sense-value but also a sound-value. "If for example," continues the critic, "an historian is describing a battle, he can convey a more effective impression of the battle by using words which not only express meaning but also suggest the movement and excitement and terror of battle. On other occasions, it may greatly conduce to the effect of a passage of prose if the words suggest music or colour or passion." Take the following passage from Lord Macaulay's *Athenian Oratory* : "Unmeasured exaction, atrocious vengeance, the madness of the multitude, the tyranny of the great, filled the Cyclades with tears, and blood, and mourning. The sword unpeopled whole islands in a day. The plough passed over the ruins of famous cities. The imperial republic sent forth her children by thousands to pine in the quarries of Syracuse, or to feed the vultures of Ægospotami.".....Here is another from Cardinal Newman's *Downfall of Ancient Civilization* :—"The dwindled race of man lived in scattered huts and mud, where best they might avoid marauder, and pestilence, and inundation ; or clung together for mutual defence in cities, where wretched cottages, on the ruins of marble-palaces, over-balanced the

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security of numbers by the frequency of conflagration." And here is a third from De Quincey:—"By the pity, by the tenderness, and by the peculiar modes of admiration, which connect themselves with the helplessness, with the innocence, and with the simplicity of children, not only are the primal affections strengthened and continually renewed, but the qualities which are dearest in the sight of heaven—the frailty, for instance, which appeals to forbearance, the innocence which symbolizes the heavenly, and the simplicity which is most alien from the worldly—are kept up in perpetual remembrance, and their ideals are continually refreshed."

No one would say that these passages are plain and simple. The effects, the wonderful effects that they produce, would have been impossible for their respective authors if the end and aim of prose had been merely simplicity and plainness. Thus a prose-writer should not only be satisfied with expressing his meaning clearly but should also aim at the appropriate use of language.

And when a prose-writer has made his meaning clear and used his words appropriately, he will have usually fulfilled the third part of his threefold function—to give lasting pleasure.

This does not mean that we share the view that "the more poetic the prose is, the finer it is." This view should be ever deplored and combated. "The habit of plastering a plain exposition or a simple narration," says Middleton Murry, "with empty poetical beauties is very easy to acquire and very hard to unlearn." What we desire to stress is that, even though the specific virtue of prose is that it is judicial, it is an instrument whose range is infinite; and *Gleanings From English Prose* will reveal

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to its readers the truth of the assertion that prose is not a single-stringed instrument but infinite in its variety. It achieves a tone of easy familiarity and simplicity as in : "Expect no healthy conclusions from me this month, reader; I can offer you only a sick-man's dreams". (Charles Lamb: *The Convalescent*). It is conspicuous by simple hammer-strokes as in Bagehot's : "Mr. Cobden was far too manly to like such folly. His mind was very peculiar, and like all peculiar minds had its sharp limits." With Burke it is "cadenced, obeying a desire for proportion, dignity and harmony "; in Macaulay it quivers with animation ; while in Carlyle it becomes "whimsical or explosive "; in Ruskin "copious and highly coloured "; in Newman it reveals strength, eloquence and suppleness.

There are still, besides, many more ways of using this instrument of prose : the pithy epigram, the Chestertonian grace, the palpitating movement of Bennett's prose in which he gives expression to his views on mental stock-taking, the note of subdued solemnity in Emerson on *Clubs*, the sublimity of Radhakrishnan, and finally the calm movement of Mr. Jayakar in *The Place of English Literature in Education*.

Surely prose is an instrument that responds to all the notes : tragic, comic, passionate, eloquent, calm, solemn, and sublime. Its range is as wide as humanity and human emotion.

III

But this gift of infinite variety was not gained in a day. English prose goes back beyond Wycliffe and Chaucer to Alfred ; and though the development of prose

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as the vehicle for argument—scientific, philosophical and legal—was comparatively rapid, it was centuries before it was adapted to a content primarily æsthetic. Even in Elizabethan times, though prose was nearly always lively and often splendid, it could not compare as an instrument of expression with Elizabethan blank verse. Bacon, for instance, makes a poor show, compared with Montaigne. Since the pre-eminent genius of Shakespeare was not applied to developing prose, another hundred years were needed “to sweat the fat off English prose,” and almost another hundred to give to it the grace and fertility of an organism in perfect condition. It was not till the times of Evelyn, Temple, Tillotson and Dryden that English prose, as we know it to-day, became established, in spite of the *Authorised Version of the Bible*. Dryden was the first great benefactor of the English language in this respect. It was he who first demonstrated how prose might be made a clean, sharp and plain instrument for work-a-day purposes. When we come to Steele and Addison we find that the instrument has acquired a new delicacy and precision, and a graceful conversational tone even if it has lost something of the exuberance which belonged to it in the hands of Dryden.

The eighteenth century saw the birth of periodical literature, popular journalism, and the English novel. And English prose became increasingly serviceable, adaptable and flexible. It learned with equal force and effect to inform, instruct, abuse, entertain, persuade, exhort and uplift. The eighteenth century established a literary style that waged war against what was slipshod, inaccurate and trivial. And even though it could not protect English prose from the inroads of tawdriness, bad taste, or modishness, it established a code of law that limited the licentious

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freedom which such travesties might have assumed. Johnson, Gibbon, Fielding, Hume and Burke sum up in themselves the highest achievement of the age. Johnson founded a new ideal of style in absolutely logical precision, adding to it precision, dignity, eloquence and force; while Burke, who is represented in our selection, showed more completely than any one else, all that was most typical of the best genius of his age—its restraint, its philosophy, its obedience to order and to law, and its gift of literary expression. He is the writer of a prose illumined as with fire, enthusiastic and yet supremely logical, fearless and yet absolutely obedient to order and to law, eloquent and yet restrained, stirred by every popular movement, and yet suggestive and philosophical.

Here we quote a passage from him to illustrate the characteristics of his style. "When I see in any of these detached gentlemen of our times the angelic purity, power and beneficence, I shall admit them to be angels. In the meantime we are born only to be men. We shall do enough if we form ourselves to be good ones. It is therefore our business to carefully cultivate in our minds, to rear to the most perfect vigour and maturity, every sort of generous and honest feeling that belongs to our nature... To cultivate friendships and to incur enmities..... To model our principles to our duties and our situation..... He trespasses against his duty who sleeps upon his watch, as well as he that goes over to the enemy."

But with all this achievement of Burke and others, there was something in the eighteenth century prose that smacked of "the compass and rule method." There was a touch of coldness and formal pedantry, and a reaction was bound to come. Already towards the close of the eighteenth century, journalism had become a living force and

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was developing a style of its own, adding terseness and swift movement to English prose.

But just as the practitioners of journalism were compelled to invent a style of their own, the crispness and quick movement of which stood in distinct contrast to the waning traditions of the eighteenth century, so others sought to escape from undue formality by straining after new experiments. De Quincey's experiments with English prose are so instructive and interesting that they seem to demand his inclusion in our book. His prose is replete with an elaborate involution, an untiring amplitude of description, and richness of ornament, which have all the appearance of eloquence. But we would like to give a word of advice to young students: Don't imitate De Quincey. "The spuriousness of the coin is soon detected when we attempt to pass it outside the narrow circle which De Quincey made his own, and where his ingenuity and inventiveness assured meed of respect."

De Quincey shows his fondness for colour and ornament in such sentences as "the *humid* light which clothes itself in the mist and glittering *iris* of human passions, desires, and genial emotions." When he is at his best, however, the words gain a vernal life of restoration to vital activities.

In Charles Lamb we have "a quaintness of archaism which loses all trace of artificiality only by the magic touch of genius." In his essay *The Convalescent*, we come across such expressions as "*honing*" for "lamenting" "*flatting*" for "flattening." But we are prepared to excuse him all this because of the charm of his personality.

In Macaulay there is another type of experiment. He

tries to give artistic bent to the language of journalism and succeeds. Even though he errs at times, his style is generally fluent, clear, and enhanced by individual touches, skilful antitheses and sparkling epigrams. That is why we get such sentences as (1) "In our own country it has been discussed, with great ability, and, I think, with very little success"; (2) "Having no fixed standard, Longinus is right only by accident"; (3) "Alas ! it had not occurred to the poor gentleman that all the knowledge to which he attached so much value was useful only as it illustrated the great poems which he despised, and would be as worthless for any other purposes as the mythology of Caffraria, or the vocabulary of Otaheite." And last, a fine passage where he asks his readers to transport themselves in thought "to that glorious city". "Let us imagine that we are entering its gates, in the time of its power and glory. A crowd is assembled round a portico. All are gazing with delight at the entablature : for Phidias is putting up the frieze.....Then for a play of Sophocles : and away to sup with Aspasia." How glorious ! This passage tells us all at once that Macaulay is a great painter in words. As in a magic prism, we see the great age of Pericles. It exemplifies, above all, his instinct for telling details and the ardent zeal which sweeps the reader off his feet.

The style of Carlyle reveals unmistakably the limits of exaggeration. How far exaggeration can go, and how far an unquestionable genius could find contorted diction, can be seen in the style of Carlyle and his imitators. He sins by over-emphasis and, as Mr. Lowell said, "he calls down fire from heaven when he cannot lay his hand on a box of lucifer matches." But one thing is certain, he never wearies by monotony.

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And there are others like Emerson, Ruskin and Bagehot who have contributed in their own way to the development of English prose. Emerson amply rewards his readers for the trouble of going along with him; Bagehot gives us English that is simple and racy; and Ruskin improves upon the example set by Landor, De Quincey and the Romantic renovators of English prose. The last paragraph of *War* shows us Ruskin at his best.

Last comes the greatest of the nineteenth century prose-stylists—Cardinal Newman. He exhibits strength, elegance and suppleness in a pre-eminent degree. He knows how to use irony. He excels in explaining the conflicts of the heart and the most subtle discussions of the mind with nobility as well as with clearness. We know about his skill in wielding the instrument of irony in such sentences as "they persecuted him for the very reason that they had little else to do." And to read passages beginning with, "All the fury of the elements," "Pontiff after Pontiff" and "High in the region of the North," is to feel the truth of the assertion of Sir Quiller-Couch that "every aspirant to style should wear the *style* of Newman as a talisman on his writing wrist."

And thus we come to our own century. The tradition of experiment is carried on and "Experimentation is ever on the increase." G. K. Chesterton, for instance, writes in a style where "the bells of a paradoxical invention ever jingle." Even though he uses words that are "a model of Anglo-Saxon English," he brings to his readers "the joy of unexpectedness." He delights in informing us that "Dickens is outside the Victorian enclosure, not so much because he was original as because he was traditional";

that "he is the derisive democrat rather than the dignified democrat"; and that "he is more really concerned to show that the tyrant is undignified than the slave is dignified". Baldwin gives vent to his thoughts on *Political Education* in language that is simple, racy and graceful. And finally, Arnold Bennett strives to cut himself off from pedantry. He hates stereotyped tricks and exploited mannerisms of construction. He is ever against a cold fiat of logic in art, and his words are suffused with a graceful flush of life. Witness such sentences as "It is the vast reservoir of true ideas and high emotions. And life is constituted of ideas and emotions", and "in the mental world what counts is not numbers but co-ordination."

There are Indian authors who too reveal a fine mastery and a great command over the English language. That English prose, which is said to be "a language of business", can be utilized for producing musical effects is proved by Indian authors as well. Sir S. Radhakrishnan does this in that magnificent passage: "You do not expect them to read the story of Thermopylæ without any emotion. You do not expect them to construe the march of Garibaldi from Palermo to Naples as an exercise in walking along the Serpentine." Thermopylæ, Garibaldi, Palermo, Naples and Serpentine. What a roll-call of rich names! These words thrill our imagination and take us to heights of insight and vision.

Jayakar's address is like the calm flow of a majestic river. He is a great master of golden phrases. He calls "their eyes, the windows of their soul," and compares Frederick Harrison's brevity and short sentences to the

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frost on a sunshiny morning. His style is chaste and effective and noted for its calmness and quietude.

Even though it is said at times that "it is too hazardous to say anything about the English prose style of to-day", we are confident of one thing and it is that the prose of to-day expresses, with unmistakable dexterity, subtle turns of thought and ingenious intricacies of feeling, what the prose of two or three generations ago would not have attempted to convey. "You cannot say in poetry" says Clutton-Brock, "what the best prose says or what the best prose accomplishes. We may perhaps be able to show to the next generation what the best prose accomplishes."

IV

The three forms of essay-writing which these *Gleanings* represent are the personal or subjective essay, the objective essay, and lectures or addresses. The first is represented by *The Convalescent* of Charles Lamb and *Clubs* of Emerson. The distinguishing quality of a personal essay—the essay *par excellence*—is that in reading it we are indifferent to its subject, because essays of this type "set out to prove nothing but illuminate every thing." The personal essayist does not worry in the least about the theme. He says with Gardiner, "Subject difficulty! here bring me the Dutch Gazette. Any peg would do to hang the hat on; it is the hat that matters." The personal essay is a sort of reverie where the essayist in the words of an old song mutters to himself: "Says I to myself, says I." The aim of the personal essayist is to win the confidence of his readers and establish a bond of friendship that never breaks and a link of sympathy that never rusts.

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Charles Lamb in *The Convalescent* wears his heart on his sleeve. It is what Edmund Gosse calls "the model of cultivated ease and a mirror of his personality." Right up from the first sentence he wins the confidence of his readers: "A pretty severe fit of indisposition" makes him a prisoner and therefore he offers his readers only a sick man's dreams. And, as he continues, *he talks* a lot that is humorous about how "sickness enlarges the dimensions of a man's self to himself", of "how a sick man lies pitying himself, honing and moaning", and "how to be sick is to enjoy monarchical prerogatives". And finally he brings us nearer and closer to the gentle personality of "the lean and meagre figure of your insignificant essayist"—to the soul of Elia.

Emerson gives us a chat on *Clubs*. His essay approximates to familiar talk and its every phrase is salted with personality. He reveals in this essay a finely trained mind gifted with humour that is scholarly and subtle. To read the paragraph beginning with "In the Norse Legends, the gods of Valhalla", is to realise his scholarship and very extensive reading. He has no castles and, if he has any, he never allows all and sundry to go in and see them.

V

And then we come to the objective essay exemplified in our selection by Burke, De Quincey, Carlyle, Macaulay, Newman, Bagehot, Bennett and perhaps Chesterton (for like destiny this writer of paradoxes is ever inscrutable). Here the subject is everything. The aim of the objective essay is to give information. The objective essayist never takes leave to egotise. If in the personal

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essay, as Montaigne says, "It is myself I portray," in an objective essay the essayist would say: "It is *the subject* I portray."

Thus, in the essayists mentioned above, we shall find that the arrangement of their essay is dictated by the subject, and by its argument and reasoning; here, it is the logic of the subject and not of mood. These essayists avoid digressions as far as possible, for they are afraid that such digressions may divert the attention of the reader from the subject. Newman and Macaulay or any of those mentioned here do not spend time in addressing "my gentle reader." They begin right with their topic and come to a logical conclusion. This is not to suggest, however, that the objective essays hide for ever the personality of their authors, but the revelation is only by the way. Here, the cynosure is their subject, and we know something about their mental equipment only because "style," as Newman said, "is a personal use of language."

VI

"If you want to be a good lecturer, you must have first the mastery over the medium of expression; then achieve the art of clear exposition; and finally learn to feel the pulse of the audience and so adjust your matter and manner. If you do this you will be able to inspire and fire the audience and make it go with you."

Now applying all these tests to the lectures or addresses or speeches in our selection, delivered by Ruskin, Bright, Dickens and Mr. Baldwin, or by Sir Radhakrishnan and Mr. Jayakar, we must admit that almost all of them reach a very high standard of efficiency. Ruskin, for instance, wins the confidence of the audience in a flash by opening

his address with the statement: "Young soldiers, I do not doubt but that many of you come unwillingly to-night, and many in contemptuous curiosity." And then this grain of mustard seed becomes a great tree and under its shade the audience listens, forgetting for the time being that it was a writer on painting that they were listening to on the subject of war for about an hour and a half. They sit and digest the advice from Ruskin, and even such stuff as "you don't understand, perhaps, why I call you sentimental schoolboys."

If Ruskin's ways are these, those of Dickens and others are entirely different. Baldwin humours the students of Phillip Stoll College by merely saying, "You have combined to give me to-day a really happy afternoon's outing." John Bright and Dickens open their speeches with sentences replete with humour. Mr. Jayakar flatters the under-graduates somewhat by saying, "I have been looking forward to this opportunity for several years"; and Radhakrishnan begins directly at the subject because he knows that the atmosphere is already prepared for it.

That all these speakers have a great command over the medium of their expression need not be mentioned. Even to read the glorious conclusions with which these lectures close, is to feel that mastery over English words and phrases seems to come to these publicists as naturally as leaves come to a tree.

As for their art of exposition, no words need be written. If they had not acquired this art, none of these speakers, whether Indian or English, would have wielded the influence they wield to-day. They have awakened a new enthusiasm in the minds of the young and kept the torch of learning and thought ablaze to guide them.

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VII

We have said above that we gather the rich grain to give food for thought to all who desire it. This statement, as a matter of fact, needs no exposition. But to silence the carping critic who may mutter that these gleaners have gathered chaff without grain, we give below one or two instances.

Let us take Burke *On Parties* and Baldwin *On Political Education*. At a time when India is torn by factions, when its atmosphere is surcharged with quarrels and is full of scramble for selfish gains, the subject of party politics ought to come home to every Indian student. It has a lesson for our own times, of the same moral and political value as it had when Burke wrote. And the assertion of Baldwin that the price of liberty is eternal vigilance, and his insistence on political education, have their deepest significance for all of us. Merely making fiery speeches full of words of learned length and thundering sound, will not make us sound politicians. We should learn to clear our minds of cant and realize the truth that "there is no joy in this world like learning and that the great joy of life is that it is a task which is never done."

While Burke and Baldwin enlighten us on political matters, De Quincey draws a clear distinction between a book of poetry and a book of cookery; and Bennett shows us the real method of mental stock-taking. But this is not all. Dickens reveals his thoughts on education which are of primary importance at the present moment when we are all interested in adult education. He points out the value of self-education for the man in the street, as well as the need for him of concentration, discipline, and ethical teaching.

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India, to-day, is in the throes of a Renaissance. It is emerging out of a Dark Age. It is realising that the nations which are bound by conventions cannot make any progress, and that there is nothing more precious than freedom. At such a time, the words of that Spalding Professor of Philosophy, Radhakrishnan, have a great value. He asserts with a mighty force of moral conviction that the responsibility of the intellectuals is really that the Britisher cannot quell the qualms of an uneasy conscience by talking, in season and out of season, of the intellectual inferiority of the Indian. This creates bitterness in the heart of the Indian and, if this process goes on, the Britisher is preparing for a first class crisis. To avoid that is to understand the Indian mind. And the Indian too should note that mere agitation cannot carry him far. The best way is to come to a mutual understanding and to terminate the age-long conflict of East and West. "If a political system could contain two great sections of mankind, one European and the other Asiatic, on a footing of justice and equality and in a community of spirit, it will prepare for the world-federation." How great and sublime ! Many would like to criticize these thoughts as cheap sentimental dreams, but these so-called practical beings forget that, if the world is to be reformed, it will be reformed by dreamers of beautiful dreams.

VIII

That is what we have gleaned and gathered. "Great books," says Arnold Bennett, "do not spring from something accidental in the great men who wrote them. They are an effluence of their very core, the expression of the life itself of the authors." Or, as someone else has said,

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"they are the manifestation of life at its highest." These *Gleanings* shall have served their purpose if they bring the reader nearer to life, and teach him his own responsibility in relation to it ; if they make him take life seriously and work it out "as a high and noble calling, and not something to shuffle through." It is in this spirit that we offer these gleanings to our readers.

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I

PARTIES IN POLITICS

PARTY is a body of men united for promoting by their joint endeavours the national interest upon some particular principle in which they are all agreed. For my part, I find it impossible to conceive, that any one believes in his own politics, or thinks them to be of any weight, who refuses to adopt the means of having them reduced into practice. It is the business of the speculative philosopher to mark the proper ends of government. It is the business of the politician, who is the philosopher in action, to find out proper means towards those ends, and to employ them with effect. Therefore every honourable connexion will avow it is their first purpose, to pursue every just method to put the men who hold their opinions into such a condition as may enable them to carry their common plans into execution, with all the power and authority of the state. As this power is attached to certain situations, it is their duty to contend for these situations. Without a proscription of others, they are bound to give to their own party the preference in all things; and by no means, for private considerations, to accept any offers of power in which the whole body is not included; nor to suffer themselves to be led, or to be controlled, or to be overbalanced, in office or in council, by those who contradict the very

fundamental principles on which their party is formed, and even those upon which every fair connexion must stand. Such a generous contention for power, on such manly and honourable maxims, will easily be distinguished from the mean and interested struggle for place and emolument. The very style of such persons will serve to discriminate them from those numberless impostors, who have deluded the ignorant with professions incompatible with human practice, and have afterwards incensed them by practices below the level of vulgar rectitude.

It is an advantage to all narrow wisdom and narrow morals that their maxims have a plausible air; and, on a cursory view, appear equal to first principles. They are light and portable. They are as current as copper coin; and about as valuable. They serve equally the first capacities and the lowest; and they are, at least, as useful to the worst men as to the best. Of this stamp is the cant of *Not men, but measures*; a sort of charm by which many people get loose from every honourable engagement. When I see a man acting this desultory and disconnected part, with as much detriment to his own fortune as prejudice to the cause of any party, I am not persuaded that he is right; but I am ready to believe he is in earnest. I respect virtue in all its situations; even when it is found in the unsuitable company of weakness. I lament to see qualities, rare and valuable, squandered away without any public utility. But when a gentleman with great visible emoluments abandons the party in which he has long acted, and tells you, it is because he proceeds upon his own judgment; that he acts on the merits of the several measures as they arise; and that he is obliged to follow his own conscience, and not that of others; he gives reasons

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which it is impossible to controvert, and discovers a character which it is impossible to mistake. What shall we think of him who never differed from a certain set of men until the moment they lost their power, and who never agreed with them in a single instance afterwards? Would not such a coincidence of interest and opinion be rather fortunate? Would it not be an extraordinary cast upon the dice, that a man's connexions should degenerate into faction, precisely at the critical moment when they lose their power, or he accepts a place? When people desert their connexions, the desertion is a manifest *fact*, upon which a direct simple issue lies, triable by plain men. Whether a *measure* of government be right or wrong, is *no matter of fact*, but a mere affair of opinion, on which men may, as they do, dispute and wrangle without end. But whether the individual *thinks* the measure right or wrong, is a point at still a greater distance from the reach of all human decision. It is therefore very convenient to politicians, not to put the judgment of their conduct on overt-acts, cognizable in any ordinary court, but upon such matter as can be triable only in that secret tribunal where they are sure of being heard with favour, or where at worst the sentence will be only private whipping.

In order to throw an odium on political connexion, these politicians suppose it a necessary incident to it that you are blindly to follow the opinions of your party, when in direct opposition to your own clear ideas; a degree of servitude that no worthy man could bear the thought of submitting to; and such as, I believe, no connexions (except some court factions) ever could be so senselessly tyrannical as to impose. Men thinking freely will, in particular instances, think differently. But still as the greater part of the measures which arise in the course of

public business are related to, or dependent on, some great *leading general principles in government*, a man must be peculiarly unfortunate in the choice of his political company, if he does not agree with them at least nine times in ten. If he does not concur in these general principles upon which the party is founded, and which necessarily draw on a concurrence in their application, he ought from the beginning to have chosen some other, more conformable to his opinions. When the question is in its nature doubtful, or not very material, the modesty which becomes an individual, and (in spite of our court moralists) that partiality which becomes a well-chosen friendship, will frequently bring on an acquiescence in the general sentiment. Thus the disagreement will naturally be rare; it will be only enough to indulge freedom, without violating concord, or disturbing arrangement. And this is all that ever was required for a character of the greatest uniformity and steadiness in connexion. How men can proceed without any connexion at all, is to me utterly incomprehensible. Of what sort of materials must that man be made, how must he be tempered and put together, who can sit whole years in parliament, with five hundred and fifty of his fellow-citizens, amidst the storm of such tempestuous passions, in the sharp conflict of so many wits and tempers and characters, in the agitation of such mighty questions, in the discussion of such vast and ponderous interests, without seeing any one sort of men, whose character, conduct, or disposition, would lead him to associate himself with them, to aid and be aided, in any one system of public utility?

I remember an old scholastic aphorism, which says, 'that the man who lives wholly detached from others must be either an angel or a devil'. When I see in any of these

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detached gentlemen of our times the angelic purity, power, and beneficence, I shall admit them to be angels. In the meantime we are born only to be men. We shall do enough if we form ourselves to be good ones. It is therefore our business carefully to cultivate in our minds, to rear to the most perfect vigour and maturity, every sort of generous and honest feeling, that belongs to our nature. To bring the dispositions that are lovely in private life into the service and conduct of the commonwealth; so to be patriots, as not to forget we are gentlemen. To cultivate friendships, and to incur enmities. To have both strong, but both selected; in the one, to be placable; in the other immovable. To model our principles to our duties and our situation. To be fully persuaded that all virtue which is impracticable is spurious; and rather to run the risk of falling into faults in a course which leads us to act with effect and energy, than to loiter out our days without blame and without use. Public life is a situation of power and energy; he trespasses against his duty who sleeps upon his watch, as well as he that goes over to the enemy.

There is, however, a time for all things. It is not every conjuncture which calls with equal force upon the activity of honest men; but critical exigencies now and then arise; and I am mistaken, if this be not one of them. Men will see the necessity of honest combination; but they may see it when it is too late. They may embody, when it will be ruinous to themselves, and of no advantage to the country; when, for want of such a timely union as may enable them to oppose in favour of the laws, with the laws on their side, they may at length find themselves under the necessity of conspiring, instead of consulting. The law, for which they stand,

may become a weapon in the hands of its bitterest enemies ; and they will be cast, at length, into that miserable alternative between slavery and civil confusion, which no good man can look upon without horror ; an alternative in which it is impossible he should take either part, with a conscience perfectly at repose. To keep that situation of guilt and remorse at the utmost distance is, therefore, our first obligation. Early activity may prevent late and fruitless violence. As yet we work in the light. The scheme of the enemies of public tranquillity has disarranged, it has not destroyed us.

If the reader believes that there really exists a faction as I have described ; a faction ruling by the private inclinations of a court, against the general sense of the people ; and that this faction, whilst it pursues a scheme for undermining all the foundations of our freedom, weakens (for the present at least) all the powers of executory government, rendering us abroad contemptible, and at home distracted ; he will believe also that nothing but a firm combination of public men against this body, and that, too, supported by the hearty concurrence of the people at large can possibly get the better of it. The people will see the necessity of restoring public men to an attention to the public opinion, and of restoring the constitution to its original principles. Above all, they will endeavour to keep the House of Commons from assuming a character which does not belong to it. They will endeavour to keep that House, for its existence, for its powers, and its privileges, as independent of every other, and as dependent upon themselves, as possible. This servitude is to a House of Commons (like obedience to the divine law) 'perfect freedom'. For if they once quit this natural, rational, and liberal obedience, having deserted the only

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proper foundation of their power, they must seek a support in an abject and unnatural dependence somewhere else. When, through the medium of this just connexion with their constituents, the genuine dignity of the House of Commons is restored it will begin to think of casting from it, with scorn, as badges of servility, all the false ornaments of illegal power, with which it has been, for some time, disgraced. It will begin to think of its old office of **CONTROL**. It will not suffer that last of evils to predominate in the country: men without popular confidence, public opinion, natural connexion, or mutual trust, invested with all the powers of government.

When they have learned this lesson themselves, they will be willing and able to teach the court that it is the true interest of the prince to have but one administration; and that one composed of those who recommend themselves to their sovereign through the opinion of their country, and not by their obsequiousness to a favourite. Such men will serve their sovereign with affection and fidelity; because his choice of them, upon such principles, is a compliment to their virtue. They will be able to serve him effectually; because they will add the weight of the country to the force of the executory power. They will be able to serve their king with dignity; because they will never abuse his name to the gratification of their private spleen or avarice. This, with allowances for human frailty, may probably be the general character of a ministry, which thinks itself accountable to the House of Commons; when the House of Commons thinks itself accountable to its constituents. If other ideas should prevail, things must remain in their present confusion, until they are hurried into all the rage of civil violence or until they sink into the dead repose of despotism.

Edmund Burke

II

THE CONVALESCENT

A PRETTY severe fit of indisposition which, under the name of a nervous fever, has made a prisoner of me for some weeks past, and is but slowly leaving me, has reduced me to an incapacity of reflecting upon any topic foreign to itself. Expect no healthy conclusions from me this month, reader ; I can offer you only sick men's dreams.

If there be a regal solitude, it is a sick bed. How the patient lords it there ; what caprices he acts without control ! how king-like he sways his pillow—tumbling, and tossing, and shifting, and lowering, and thumping, and flattening, and moulding it, to the ever varying requisitions of his throbbing temples.

He changes sides oftener than a politician. Now he lies full length, then half-length, obliquely, transversely, head and feet quite across the bed ; and none accuses him of tergiversation. Within the four curtains he is absolute. They are his Mare Clausum.

How sickness enlarges the dimensions of a man's self to himself ! he is his own exclusive object. Supreme selfishness is inculcated upon him as his only duty. 'Tis the Two Tables of the Law to him. He has nothing to think of but how to get well. What passes out of doors, or within them, so he hear not the jarring of them, affects him not.

A little while ago he was greatly concerned in the event of a law-suit, which was to be the making or the marring of his dearest friend. He was to be seen trudging about upon this man's errand to fifty quarters of the town at once, jogging this witness, refreshing that solicitor. The cause

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was to come on yesterday. He is absolutely as indifferent to the decision, as if it were a question to be tried at Pekin. Peradventure from some whispering, going on about the house, not intended for his hearing, he picks up enough to make him understand, that things went cross-grained in the Court yesterday, and his friend is ruined. But the word "friend", and the word "ruin", disturb him no more than so much jargon. He is not to think of any thing but how to get better.

What a world of foreign cares are merged in that absorbing consideration !

He has put on his strong armour of sickness, he is wrapped in the callous hide of suffering ; he keeps his sympathy, like some curious vintage, under trusty lock and key, for his own use only.

He lies pitying himself, honing and moaning to himself; he yearneth over himself ; his bowels are even melted within him, to think what he suffers ; he is not ashamed to weep over himself.

He is for ever plotting how to do some good to himself ; studying little stratagems and artificial alleviations.

He makes the most of himself ; dividing himself, by an allowable fiction, into as many distinct individuals, as he hath sore and sorrowing members. Sometimes he meditates—as of a thing apart from him—upon his poor aching head, and that dull pain which, dozing or waking, lay in it all the past night like a log, or palpable substance of pain, not to be removed without opening the very skull, as it seemed, to take it thence. Or he pities his long, clammy, attenuated fingers. He compassionates himself all over ; and his bed is a very discipline of humanity, and tender heart.

CHARLES LAMB

He is his own sympathiser ; and instinctively feels that none can so well perform that office for him. He cares for few spectators to his tragedy. Only that punctual face of the old nurse pleases him, that announces his broths and his cordials. He likes it because it is so unmoved, and because he can pour forth his feverish ejaculations before it as unreservedly as to his bed-post.

To the world's business he is dead. He understands not what the callings and occupations of mortals are ; only he has a glimmering conceit of some such thing, when the doctor makes his daily call : and even in the lines on that busy face he reads no multiplicity of patients, but solely conceives of himself as *the sick man*. To what other uneasy couch the good man is hastening, when he slips out of his chamber, folding up his thin *douceur* so carefully, for fear of rustling—is no speculation which he can at present entertain. He thinks only of the regular return of the same phenomenon at the same hour to-morrow.

Household rumours touch him not. Some faint murmur, indicative of life going on within the house, soothes him, while he knows not distinctly what it is. He is not to know anything, not to think of anything. Servants gliding up or down the distant staircase, treading as upon velvet, gently keep his ear awake, so long as he troubles not himself further than with some feeble guess at their errands. Exacter knowledge would be a burthen to him ; he can just endure the pressure of conjecture. He opens his eye faintly at the dull stroke of the muffled knocker, and closes it again without asking "Who was it ?" He is flattered by a general notion that inquiries are making after him, but he cares not to know the name of the

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inquirer. In the general stillness, and awful hush of the house, he lies in state, and feels his sovereignty. / My son

To be sick is to enjoy monarchical prerogatives. Compare the silent tread and quiet ministry, almost by the eye only, with which he is served—with the careless demeanour, the unceremonious goings in and out (slapping of doors, or leaving them open) of the very same attendants, when he is getting a little better—and you will confess, that from the bed of sickness (throne let me rather call it) to the elbow chair of convalescence, is a fall from dignity, amounting to a deposition.

How convalescence shrinks a man back to his pristine stature! where is now the space, which he occupied so lately, in his own, in the family's eye?

The scene of his regalities, his sick-room, which was his presence chamber, where he lay and acted his despotic fancies—how is it reduced to a common bed-room! The trimness of the very bed has something petty and unmeaning about it. It is *made* every day. How unlike to that wavy, many-furrowed, oceanic surface, which it presented so short a time since, when to *make* it was a service not to be thought of at oftener than three or four day revolutions, when the patient was with pain and grief to be lifted for a little while out of it, to submit to the encroachments of unwelcome neatness, and decencies which his shaken frame deprecated; then to be lifted into it again, for another three or four days' respite, to flounder it out of shape again, while every fresh furrow was an historical record of some shifting posture, some uneasy turning, some seeking for a little ease; and the shrunk skin scarce told a truer story than the crumpled coverlid. / style

Hushed are those mysterious sighs—those groans—

so much more awful, while we knew not from what caverns of vast hidden suffering they proceeded. The Lernean pangs are quenched. The riddle of sickness is solved ; and Philoctetes is become an ordinary personage.

Perhaps some relic of the sick man's dream of greatness survives in the still lingering visitations of the medical attendant. But how is he, too, changed with every thing else ! Can this be he—this man of news—of chat—of anecdote—of everything but physic—can this be he, who so lately came between the patient and his cruel enemy, as on some solemn embassy from Nature, erecting himself into a high mediating party ?—Pshaw ? 'tis some old woman.

Farewell with him all that made sickness pompous—the spell that hushed the household—the desert-like stillness, felt throughout its inmost chambers—the mute attendance—the inquiry by looks—the still softer delicacies of self-attention—the sole and single eye of distemper alone fixed upon itself—world-thoughts excluded—the man a world unto himself—his own theatre—

What a speck is he dwindled into !

In this flat swamp of convalescence, left by the ebb of sickness, yet far enough from the terra firma of established health, your note, dear Editor, reached me, requesting—an article. In Articulo Mortis, thought I ; but it is something hard—and the quibble, wretched as it was, relieved me. The summons, unseasonable as it appeared, seemed to link me on again to the petty business of life, which I had lost sight of ; a gentle call to activity, however trivial ; a wholesome weaning from that preposterous dream of self-absorption—the puffy state of sickness—in which I confess

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to have lain so long, insensible to the magazines and monarchies of the world alike; to its laws and to its literature. The hypochondriac flatus is subsiding; the acres, which in imagination I had spread over—for the sick man swells in the sole contemplation of his single sufferings, till he becomes a Tityus to himself—are wasting to a span; and for the giant of self-importance, which I was so lately, you have me once again in my natural pretensions—the lean and meagre figure of your insignificant Essayist.

Charles Lamb

Hypochondriac - sufferer from
of. causeless depression.

"To talk about health is the most un-
"housewives Nostrum" healthy thing
"A shivering thought!" in the world

III

THE TWO FUNCTIONS OF LITERATURE

IN that great social organ which, collectively, we call literature, there may be distinguished two separate offices that may blend and often *do* so, but capable severally, of a severe insulation, and naturally fitted for reciprocal repulsion. There is, first, the literature of knowledge; and, secondly, the literature of power. The function of the first is—to teach; the function of the second is—to move: the first is a rudder; the second, an oar or a sail. The first speaks to the mere discursive understanding; the second speaks ultimately, it may happen, to the higher understanding or reason, but always through affections of pleasure and sympathy. Remotely, it may travel towards an object seated in what Lord Bacon calls *dry* light; but, proximately, it does and must operate—else it ceases to be a literature of power—on and through that *humid* light which clothes itself in the mists and glittering iris of human passions, desires, and genial emotions. Men have so little reflected on the higher functions of literature as to find it a paradox if one should describe it as a mean or subordinate purpose of books to give information. But this is a paradox only in the sense which makes it honourable to be paradoxical. Whenever we talk in ordinary language of seeking information or gaining knowledge, we understand the words as connected with something of absolute novelty. But it is the grandeur of all truth which can occupy a very high place in human interests that it is never absolutely novel to the meanest of minds: it exists eternally by way of germ or latent principle in the lowest as in the highest, needing to be developed, but never to be planted. To be capable of transplantation is the immediate criterion of a truth that

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ranges on a lower scale. Besides which, there is a rarer thing than truth—namely, power, or deep sympathy with truth. What is the effect, for instance, upon society, of children? By the pity, by the tenderness, and by the peculiar modes of admiration, which connect themselves with the helplessness, with the innocence, and with the simplicity of children, not only are the primal affections strengthened and continually renewed, but the qualities which are dearest in the sight of heaven—the frailty, for instance, which appeals to forbearance, the innocence which symbolizes the heavenly, and the simplicity which is most alien from the worldly—are kept up in perpetual remembrance, and their ideals are continually refreshed. A purpose of the same nature is answered by the higher literature, viz. the literature of power. What do you learn from *Paradise Lost*? Nothing at all. What do you learn from a cookery-book? Something new, something that you did not know before, in every paragraph. But would you therefore put the wretched cookery-book on a higher level of estimation than the divine poem? What you owe to Milton is not any knowledge, of which a million separate items are still but a million of advancing steps on the same earthly level; what you owe is power—that is, exercise and expansion to your own latent capacity of sympathy with the infinite, where every pulse and each separate influx is a step upwards, a step ascending as upon a Jacob's ladder from earth to mysterious altitudes above the earth. All the steps of knowledge, from first to last, carry you further on the same plane, but could never raise you one foot above your ancient level of earth: whereas the very first step in power is a flight—is an ascending movement into another element where earth is forgotten.

Were it not that human sensibilities are ventilated and

continually called out into exercise by the great phenomena of infancy, or of real life as it moves through chance and change, or of literature as it recombines these elements in the mimicries of poetry, romance, etc., it is certain that, like any animal power or muscular energy falling into disuse, all such sensibilities would gradually droop and dwindle. It is in relation to these great *moral* capacities of man that the literature of power, as contradistinguished from that of knowledge, lives and has its field of action. It is concerned with what is highest in man; for the Scriptures themselves never condescended to deal by suggestion or co-operation with the mere discursive understanding: when speaking of man in his intellectual capacity, the Scriptures speak not of the understanding, but of '*the understanding heart*'—making the heart, i.e. the great *intuitive* (or non-discursive) organ, to be the interchangeable formula for man in his highest state of capacity for the infinite. Tragedy, romance, fairy tale, or epopee, all alike restore to man's mind the ideals of justice, of hope, of truth, of mercy, of retribution, which else (left to the support of daily life in its realities) would languish for want of sufficient illustration. What is meant, for instance, by *poetic justice*?—It does not mean a justice that differs by its object from the ordinary justice of human jurisprudence; for then it must be confessedly a very bad kind of justice; but it means a justice that differs from common forensic justice by the degree in which it *attains* its object, a justice that is more omnipotent over its own ends, as dealing—not with the refractory elements of earthly life, but with the elements of its own creation, and with materials flexible to its own purest preconceptions. It is certain that, were it not for the Literature of Power, these ideals would often remain amongst us as mere arid notional forms; whereas, by the creative forces of man put

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forth in literature, they gain a vernal life of restoration, and germinate into vital activities. The commonest novel, by moving in alliance with human fears and hopes, with human instincts of wrong and right, sustains and quickens those affections. Calling them into action, it rescues them from torpor. And hence the pre-eminency over all authors that merely *teach* of the meanest that *moves*, or that teaches, if at all, indirectly *by* moving. The very highest work that has ever existed in the Literature of Knowledge is but a *provisional* work : a book upon trial and sufferance, and *quamdiu bene se gesserit*. Let its teaching be even partially revised, let it be but expanded—nay, even let its teaching be but placed in a better order—and instantly it is superseded. Whereas the feeblest works in the Literature of Power, surviving at all, survive as finished and unalterable amongst men. For instance, the *Principia* of Sir Isaac Newton was a book *militant* on earth from the first. In all stages of its progress it would have to fight for its existence : 1st, as regards absolute truth ; 2ndly, when that combat was over, as regards its form or mode of presenting the truth. And as soon as a La Place, or anybody else, builds higher upon the foundations laid by this book, effectually he throws it out of the sunshine into decay and darkness ; by weapons won from this book he superannuates and destroys this book, so that soon the name of Newton remains as a mere *nominis umbra*, but his book, as a living power, has transmigrated into other forms. Now, on the contrary, the *Iliad*, the *Prometheus* of Aeschylus, the *Othello* or *King Lear*, the *Hamlet* or *Macbeth*, and the *Paradise Lost*, are not militant, but triumphant for ever as long as the languages exist in which they speak or can be taught to speak. They never *can* transmigrate into new

incarnations. To reproduce *these* in new forms, or variations, even if in some things they should be improved, would be to plagiarize. A good steam-engine is properly superseded by a better. But one lovely pastoral valley is not superseded by another, nor a statue of Praxiteles by a statue of Michael Angelo. These things are separated not by imparity, but by disparity. They are not thought of as unequal under the same standard, but as different in *kind*, and, if otherwise equal, as equal under a different standard. Human works of immortal beauty and works of nature in one respect stand on the same footing: they never absolutely repeat each other, never approach so near as not to differ; and they differ not as better and worse, or simply by more and less: they differ by undecipherable and incommunicable differences, that cannot be caught by mimicries, that cannot be reflected in the mirror of copies, that cannot become ponderable in the scales of vulgar comparison.

Thomas De Quincey

IV

BIOGRAPHY

MAN'S sociality of nature evinces itself, in spite of all that can be said, with abundant evidence by this one fact, were there no other : the unspeakable delight he takes in Biography. It is written, 'The proper study of mankind is man ;' to which study, let us candidly admit, he, by true or by false methods, applies himself, nothing loath. 'Man' ^{with his soul} is perennially interesting to man ; nay, if we look strictly to it, there is nothing else interesting.' How inexpressibly comfortable to know our fellow-creature ; to see into him, understand his goings-forth, decipher the whole heart of his mystery : nay, not only to see into him, but even to see out of him, to view the world altogether as he views it ; so that we can theoretically construe him, and could almost practically personate him ; and do now thoroughly discern both what manner of man he is, and what manner of thing he has got to work on and live on !

A scientific interest and a poetic one alike inspire us in this matter. A scientific : because every mortal has a Problem of Existence set before him, which were it only, what for the most it is, the Problem of keeping soul and body together, must be to a certain extent *original*, unlike every other ; and yet, at the same time, so *like* every other ; like our own, therefore ; instructive, moreover, since we also are indentured to *live*. A poetic interest still more : for precisely this same struggle of human Freewill against material Necessity, which every man's Life, by the mere circumstance that the man continues alive, will more or less victoriously exhibit,—is that which above all else, or rather inclusive of all else, calls

the Sympathy of mortal hearts into action ; and whether as acted, or as represented and written of, not only is Poetry, but is the sole Poetry possible. Borne onwards by which two all-embracing interests, may the earnest Lover of Biography expand himself on all sides, and indefinitely enrich himself. Looking with the eyes of every new neighbour, he can discern a new world different for each : feeling with the heart of every neighbour, he lives with every neighbour's life, even as with his own. Of these millions of living men, each individual is a mirror to us : a mirror both scientific and poetic ; or, if you will, both natural and magical ;—from which one would so gladly draw aside the gauze veil ; and, peering therein, discern the image of his own natural face, and the supernatural secrets that prophetically lie under the same !

Observe, accordingly, to what extent, in the actual course of things, this business of Biography is practised and relished. Define to thyself, judicious Reader, the real significance of these phenomena, named Gossip, Egoism, Personal Narrative (miraculous or not), Scandal, Raillery, Slander, and suchlike ; the sum-total of which (with some fractional addition of a better ingredient, generally too small to be noticeable) constitutes that other grand phenomenon still called 'Conversation.' Do they not mean wholly : *Biography* and *Autobiography* ? Not only in the common Speech of men ; but in all Art too, which is or should be the concentrated and conserved essence of what men can speak and show, Biography is almost the one thing needful.

Even in the highest works of Art, our interest, as the critics complain, is too apt to be strongly or even mainly of a Biographic sort. In the Art we can nowise

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forget the Artist : while looking on the *Transfiguration*, while studying the *Iliad*, we ever strive to figure to ourselves what spirit dwelt in Raphael ; what a head was that of Homer, wherein, woven of Elysian light and Tartarean gloom, that old world fashioned itself together, of which these written Greek characters are but a feeble though perennial copy. The Painter and the Singer are present to us ; we partially and for the time become the very Painter and the very Singer, while we enjoy the Picture and the Song. Perhaps too, let the critic say what he will, this is the highest enjoyment, the clearest recognition, we can have of these. Art indeed is Art ; yet Man also is Man. Had the *Transfiguration* been painted without human hand ; had it grown merely on the canvas, say by atmospheric influences, as lichen-pictures do on rocks,—it were a grand Picture doubtless ; yet nothing like so grand as *the* Picture, which, on opening our eyes, we everywhere in Heaven and in Earth see painted ; and everywhere pass over with indifference,—because the Painter was not a Man. Think of this ; much lies in it. The Vatican is great ; yet poor to Chimborazo or the Peak of Teneriffe : its dome is but a foolish Big-endian or Little-endian chip of an egg-shell, compared with that star-fretted Dome where Arcturus and Orion glance forever ; which latter, notwithstanding, who looks at, save perhaps some necessitous star-gazer bent to make Almanacs ; some thick-quilted watchman, to see what weather it will prove ? The Biographic interest is wanting : no Michael Angelo was He who built that 'Temple of Immensity ;' therefore do we, pitiful Littlenesses as we are, turn rather to wonder and to worship in the little toybox of a Temple built by our like.

Even in this essay Carlyle does not forget let us forget of the good things behind every creation.

Still more decisively, still more exclusively does the Biographic interest manifest itself, as we descend into lower regions of spiritual communication ; through the whole range of what is called Literature. Of History, for example, the most honoured, if not honourable species of composition, is not the whole purport Biographic ? 'History,' it has been said, 'is the essence of innumerable Biographies.' Such, at least, it should be ; whether it is, might admit of question. But, in any case, what hope have we in turning over those old interminable Chronicles, with their garrulities and insipidities ; or still worse, in patiently examining those modern Narrations, of the Philosophic kind, where 'Philosophy, teaching by Experience,' has to sit like owl on housetop, seeing nothing, understanding nothing, uttering only, with such solemnity, her perpetual most wearisome *hoo-hoo* :—what hope have we, except for the most part fallacious one of gaining some acquaintance with our fellow-creatures, though dead and vanished, yet dear to us ; how they got along in those old days, suffering and doing ; to what extent, and under what circumstances, they resisted the Devil and triumphed over him, or struck their colours to him, and were trodden under foot by him ; how, in short, the perennial Battle went, which men name Life, which we also in these new days, with indifferent fortune, have to fight, and must bequeath to our sons and grandsons to go on fighting,—till the Enemy one day be quite vanquished and abolished, or else the great Night sink and part the combatants ; and thus, either by some Millennium or some new Noah's Deluge, the Volume of Universal History wind itself up ! Other hope, in studying such Books, we have none ; and that it is a deceitful hope, who that has tried knows not ? A feast of widest Biographic insight is spread for us ; we

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enter full of hungry anticipations: alas, like so many other feasts, which Life invites us to, a mere Ossian's 'feast of shells,'—the food and liquor being all emptied out and clean gone, and only the vacant dishes and deceitful emblems thereof left! Your modern Historical Restaurateurs are indeed little better than high-priests of Famine; that keep choicest china dinner sets, only no dinner to serve therein. Yet such is our Biographic appetite, we run trying from shop to shop, with ever new hope; and, unless we could eat the wind, with ever new disappointment.

Again, consider the whole class of Fictitious Narratives; from the highest category of epic or dramatic Poetry, in Shakespeare and Homer, down to the lowest of froth Prose in the Fashionable Novel. What are all these but so many mimic Biographies? Of no given Book, not even of a Fashionable Novel, can you predicate with certainty that its vacuity is absolute; that there are not other vacuities which shall partially replenish themselves therefrom, and esteem it a plenum. How knowest thou, may the distressed Novelwright exclaim, that I, here where I sit, am the Foolishest of existing mortals; that this my Long-ear of a Fictitious Biography shall not find one and the other, into whose still longer ears it may be the means, under Providence, of instilling somewhat? We answer, None knows, none can certainly know: therefore, write on, worthy Brother, even as thou canst, even as it has been given thee.

Here, however, in regard to 'Fictitious Biographies,' and much other matter of like sort, which the greener mind in these days inditeth, we may as well insert some singular sentences on the importance and significance of *Reality*, as they stand written for us in Professor Gottfried Sauerteig's *Ästhetische Springwurzeln*; a Work, perhaps, as yet new

to most English readers. The Professor and Doctor is not a man whom we can praise without reservation ; neither shall we say that his *Springwurzeln* (a sort of magical picklocks, as he affectedly names them) are adequate to 'start' every *bolt* that locks up an æsthetic mystery ; nevertheless, in his crabbed, one-sided way, he sometimes hits masses of the truth. We endeavour to translate faithfully, and trust the reader will find it worth serious perusal :

'The significance, even for poetic purposes,' says Sauerteig, "that lies in REALITY is too apt to escape us ; is perhaps only now beginning to be discerned. When we named *Rousseau's Confessions* an ^{suited to elegy} elégiaco-didactic ^{meaning to imitate} Poem, we meant more than an empty figure of speech ; we meant a historical scientific fact.

^{P. clunder}
'Fiction, while the feigner of it knows that he is feigning, partakes, more than we suspect, of the nature of *lying* ; and has ever an, in some degree, unsatisfactory character. All Mythologies were once Philosophies ; were *believed* : the Epic Poems of old time, so long as they continued *epic*, and had any complete impressiveness, were Histories, and understood to be narratives of *facts*. In so far as Homer employed his gods as mere ornamental fringes, and had not himself, or at least did not expect his hearers to have, a belief that they were real agents in those antique doings ; so far did he fail to be *genuine* ; so far was he a partially *hollow* and false singer ; and sang to please only a portion of man's mind, not the whole thereof.

'Imagination is, after all, but a poor matter when it has to part company with Understanding, and even front it hostilely in flat contradiction. Our mind is divided in

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twain: there is contest; wherein that which is weaker must needs come to the worse. Now of all feelings, states, principles, call it what you will, in man's mind, is not Belief the clearest, strongest; against which all others contend in vain? Belief is, indeed, the beginning and first condition of all spiritual Force whatsoever: only in so far as Imagination, were it but momentarily, is *believed*, can there be any use or meaning in it, any enjoyment of it. And what is momentary Belief? The enjoyment of a moment. Whereas a perennial Belief were enjoyment perennially, and with the whole united soul.

'It is thus that I judge of the Supernatural in an Epic Poem; and would say, the instant it has ceased to be authentically supernatural, and become what you call "Machinery:" sweep it out of sight (*schaff'es mir vom Halse*)! Of a truth, that same "Machinery," about which the critics make such hubbub, was well named *Machinery*; for it is in very deed mechanical, nowise inspired or poetical. Neither for us is there the smallest æsthetic enjoyment in it; save only in this way; that we believe it *to have been believed*,—by the Singer or his Hearers; into whose case we now laboriously struggle to transport ourselves; and so, with stinted enough result, catch some reflex of the Reality, which for them was wholly real, and visible face to face. Whenever it has come so far that your "Machinery" is avowedly mechanical and unbelieved,—what is it else, if we dare tell ourselves the truth, but a miserable, meaningless Deception, kept-up by old use and wont alone? If the gods of an *Iliad* are to us no longer authentic Shapes of Terror, heart-stirring, heart-appealing, but only vague-glittering Shadows,—what must the dead Pagan gods of an *Epigoniad* be, the dead-living Pagan-Christian gods of a *Lusiad*, the

concrete-abstract, evangelical-metaphysical gods of a *Paradise Lost*? Superannuated lumber! Cast raiment, at best; in which some poor mime, strutting and swaggering, may or may not set forth new noble Human Feelings (again a Reality), and so secure, or not secure, our pardon of such hoydenish masking; for which, in any case, he has a pardon to *ask*.

'True enough, none but the earliest Epic Poems can claim this distinction of entire credibility, of Reality: after an *Iliad*, a *Shaster*, a *Koran*, and other the like primitive performances, the rest seem, by this rule of mine, to be altogether excluded from the list. Accordingly, what *are* all the rest, from Virgil's *Æneid* downwards, in comparison? Frosty, artificial, heterogeneous things; more of gumflowers than of roses; at the best, of the two mixed incoherently together: to some of which, indeed, it were hard to deny the title of Poems; yet to no one of which can that title belong in any sense even resembling the old high one it, in those old days, conveyed,—when the epithet "divine" or "sacred" as applied to the uttered Word of man, was not a vain metaphor, a vain sound, but a real name with meaning. Thus, too, the farther we recede from those early days, when Poetry, as true Poetry is always, was still sacred or divine, and inspired (what ours, in great part, only pretends to be),—the more impossible becomes it to produce any, we say not true Poetry, but tolerable semblance of such; the hollower, in particular, grow all manner of Epics; till at length, as in this generation, the very name of Epic sets men a-yawning, the announcement of a new Epic is received as a public calamity.

'But what if the *impossible* being once for all quite discarded, the *probable* be well adhered to: how stands

Sandwich
serious
young ones

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it with fiction *then*? Why, then, I would say, the evil is much mended, but nowise completely cured. We have then, in place of the wholly dead modern Epic, the partially living modern Novel; to which latter it is much easier to lend that above mentioned, so essential "momentary credence" than to the former: indeed, infinitely easier; for the former being flatly incredible, no mortal *can* for a moment credit it, for a moment enjoy it. Thus, here and there, a *Tom Jones*, a *Meister*, a *Crusoe*, will yield no little solacement to the minds of men; though still immeasurably less than a *Reality* would, were the significance thereof as impressively unfolded, were the genius that could so unfold it once given us by the kind Heavens. Neither say thou that proper Realities are wanting; for Man's Life, now, as of old, is the genuine work of God; wherever there is a Man, a God also is revealed, and all that is Godlike: a whole epitome of the Infinite, with its meanings, lies enfolded in the Life of every Man. Only, alas, that the Seer to discern this same Godlike, and with fit utterance *unfold* it for us, is wanting, and may long be wanting!

'Nay, a question arises on us here, wherein the whole German reading-world will eagerly join: Whether man *can* any longer be so interested by the spoken Word, as he often was in those primeval days, when rapt away by its inscrutable power, he pronounced it, in such dialect as he had, to be transcendental (to *transcend* all measure), to be sacred, prophetic and the inspiration of a god? For myself, I (*ich meines Ortes*), by faith or by insight, do heartily understand that the answer to such question will be, Yea! For never that I could in searching find out, has Man been, by Time which devours so much, deprived of any faculty whatsoever that he in any era was possessed of.

To my seeming, the babe born yesterday has all the organs of Body. Soul and Spirit, and in exactly the same combination and entireness, that the oldest Pelasgic Greek, or Mesopotamian Patriarch, or Father Adam himself could boast of. Ten fingers, one heart with venous and arterial blood therein, still belong to man that is born of woman: when did he lose any of his spiritual Endowments, either; above all, his highest Spiritual Endowment, that of revealing Poetic Beauty, and of adequately receiving the same? Not the material, not the susceptibility is wanting; only the Poet, or long series of Poets, to work on these. True, alas too true, the Poet *is* still utterly wanting, or all but utterly: nevertheless have we not centuries enough before us to produce him in? Him and much else!—I, for the present, will but predict that chiefly by working more and more on REALITY, and evolving more and more wisely *its* inexhaustible meanings; and, in brief, speaking forth in fit utterance whatsoever our whole soul *believes*, and ceasing to speak forth what thing soever our whole soul does not believe,—will this high emprise be accomplished, or approximated to.'

These notable, and not unfounded, though partial and *deep*-seeing rather than *wide*-seeing observations on the great import of REALITY, considered even as a poetic material, we have inserted the more willingly, because a transient feeling to the same purpose may often have suggested itself to many readers; and, on the whole, it is good that every reader and every writer understand, with all intensity of conviction, what quite infinite worth lies in Truth; how all-pervading, omnipotent, in man's mind, is the thing we name *Belief*. For the rest, Herr Sauerteig, though one-sided, on this matter of Reality, seems heartily persuaded, and is not perhaps so ignorant as he looks. It

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discourse

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cannot be unknown to him, for example, what noise is made about 'Invention'; what a supreme rank this faculty is reckoned to hold in the poetic endowment. Great truly is Invention; nevertheless, that is but a poor exercise of it with which Belief is not concerned. 'An Irishman with whisky in his head,' as poor Byron said, will invent you, in this kind, till there is enough and to spare. Nay, perhaps, if we consider well, the highest exercise of Invention has, in very deed, nothing to do with Fiction; but is an invention of new Truth, what we can call a Revelation; which last does undoubtedly transcend all other poetic efforts, nor can Herr Sauerteig be too loud in its praises. But, on the other hand, whether such effort is still possible for man, Herr Sauerteig and the bulk of the world are probably at issue;—and will probably continue so till that same 'Revelation,' or new 'Invention of Reality,' of the sort he desiderates, shall itself make its appearance.

Meanwhile, quitting these airy regions, let any one bethink him how impressive the smallest historical *fact* may become, as contrasted with the grandest *fictitious event*; what an incalculable force lies for us in this consideration: The Thing which I here hold imaged in my mind did actually occur; was, in very truth, an element in the system of the All, whereof I too form part; had therefore, and has, through all time, an authentic being; is not a dream, but a reality! We ourselves can remember reading, in *Lord Clarendon*,¹ with feelings perhaps somehow accidentally opened to it,—certainly with a depth of impression strange to us then and now,—that insignificant-looking passage, where Charles, after the battle of Worcester, glides down, with Squire Careless, from the Royal Oak, at nightfall, being hungry: how, 'making a

¹*History of the Rebellion*, iii, 625.

shift to get over hedges and ditches, after walking at least eight or nine miles, which were the more grievous to the King by the weight of his boots (for he could not put *them* off when he cut off his hair, for want of shoes), before morning they came to *a poor cottage, the owner whereof, being a Roman Catholic, was known to Careless.* How this poor drudge, being knocked-up from his snoring, 'carried them into a little barn full of hay, which was a better lodging than he had for himself;' and by and by, not without difficulty, brought his Majesty 'a piece of bread and a great pot of buttermilk,' saying candidly that "he himself lived by his daily labour, and that what he had brought him was the fare he and his wife had": on which nourishing diet his Majesty, 'staying upon the haymow,' feeds thankfully for two days; and then departs, under new guidance, having first changed clothes, down to the very shirt and 'old pair of shoes,' with his landlord; and so, as worthy Bunyan has it, 'goes on his way, and sees him no more.'

So too, in some *Boswell's Life of Johnson*, how indelible and magically bright does many a little *Reality* dwell in our remembrance! There is no need that the personages on the scene be a King and Clown; that the scene be the Forest of the Royal Oak, 'on the borders of Staffordshire:' need only that the scene lie on this old firm Earth of ours, where we also have so surprisingly arrived; that the personages be *men*, and *seen* with the eyes of a man. Foolish enough, how some slight, perhaps mean and even ugly incident, if *real* and well presented, will fix itself in a susceptible memory, and lie ennobled there; silvered over with the pale cast of thought, with the pathos which belongs only to the Dead. For the Past is all holy to us; the Dead are all holy, even they that were base and wicked

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while alive. Their baseness and wickedness was not *They*, was but the heavy and unmanageable Environment that lay round them, with which they fought unprevailing: *they* (the ethereal god-given Force that dwelt in them, and was their *Self*, have now shuffled-off that heavy Environment, and are free and pure: their life-long Battle, go how it might, is all ended, with many wounds or with fewer; they have been recalled from it, and the once harsh-jarring battle-field has become a silent awe-inspiring Golgotha, and *Gottesacker* (Field of God) !—Boswell relates this in itself smallest and poorest of occurrences: 'As we walked along the Strand tonight, arm in arm, a woman of the town accosted us in the usual enticing manner. "No, no, my girl," said Johnson; "it won't do." He, however, did not treat her with harshness; and we talked of the wretched life of such women.' Strange power of *Reality* ! Not even this poorest of occurrences, but now, after seventy years are come and gone, has a meaning for us. Do but consider that it is *true*; that it did in very deed occur! That unhappy Outcast, with all her sins and woes, her lawless desires, too complex mischances, her wailings and her riotings, has departed utterly; alas! her siren finery has got all besmudged, ground, generations since, into dust and smoke; of her degraded body, and whole miserable earthly existence, all is away: *she* is no longer here, but far from us, in the bosom of Eternity,—whence we too came, whither we too are bound! Johnson said, "No, no, my girl; it won't do;" and then 'we talked';—and herewith the wretched one, seen but for the twinkling of an eye, passes on into the utter Darkness. No high *Calista*, that ever issued from Story-teller's brain, will impress us more deeply than this meanest of the mean; and for a good reason: That *she* issued from the Maker of Men.

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living and life-like.

It is well worth the Artist's while to examine for himself what it is that gives such pitiable incidents their memorableness ; his aim likewise is, above all things, to be *memorable*. Half the effect, we already perceive, depends on the object ; on its being *real*, on its being really *seen*. The other half will depend on the observer ; and the question now is : How are real objects to be so seen ; on what quality of observing, or of style in describing, does this so intense pictorial power depend ? Often a slight circumstance contributes curiously to the result: some little, and perhaps to appearance accidental, feature is presented; a light-gleam, which instantaneously *excites* the mind, and urges it to complete the picture, and evolve the meaning thereof for itself. By critics, such light-gleams and their almost magical influence have frequently been noted : but the power to produce such, to select such features as will produce them, is generally treated as a knack, or trick of the trade, a secret for being 'graphic ;' whereas these magical feats are, in truth, rather *inspirations*; and the gift of performing them, which acts unconsciously, without forethought, and as if by nature alone, is properly a *genius* for description.

One grand, invaluable secret there is, however, which includes all the rest, and, what is comfortable, lies clearly in every man's power : *To have an open loving heart, and what follows from the possession of such.* Truly, it has been said, emphatically in these days ought it to be repeated: A loving Heart is the beginning of all Knowledge. This it is that opens the whole mind, quickens every faculty of the intellect to do its fit work, that of *knowing* ; and therefrom, by sure consequence, of *vividly uttering-forth*. Other secret for being 'graphic' is there none, worth having : but this is an all-sufficient one. See, for example, what a small Boswell can do ! Hereby, indeed, is the whole

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man made a living mirror, wherein the wonders of this ever-wonderful Universe are, in their true light (which is ever a magical, miraculous one) represented, and reflected back on us. It has been said, 'the heart sees farther than the head :' but, indeed, without 'the seeing heart,' there is no true seeing for the head so much as possible ; all is mere oversight, hallucination and vain superficial phantasmagoria, which can permanently profit no one.

Here, too, may we not pause for an instant, and make a practical reflection? Considering the multitude of mortals that handle the Pen in these days, and can mostly spell, and write without glaring violations of grammar, the question naturally arises: How is it, then, that no Work proceeds from them, bearing any stamp of authenticity and permanence ; of worth for more than one day ? Ship-loads of Fashionable Novels, Sentimental Rhymes, Tragedies, Farces, Diaries of Travel, Tales by flood and field, are swallowed monthly into the bottomless Pool : still does the Press toil ; innumerable Paper-makers, Compositors, Printers, Devils, Book-binders, and Hawkers grown hoarse with loud proclaiming, rest not from their labour ; and still, in torrents, rushes on the great array of Publications, unpausing, to their final home ; and still Oblivion, like the Grave, cries, Give ! Give ! How is it that of all these countless multitudes, no one can attain to the smallest mark of excellence, or produce aught that shall endure longer than 'snow-flake on the river' or the foam of penny-beer ? We answer : Because they are foam ; because there is no Reality in them. These Three Thousand men, women and children, that make up the army of British Authors, do not, if we will well consider it, see anything whatever ; consequently have nothing that they can record and utter, only more or fewer things that they can plausibly pretend

to record. The Universe, of Man and Nature, is still quite shut-up from them ; the 'open secret' still utterly a secret : because no sympathy with Man or Nature, no love and free simplicity of heart has yet unfolded the same. Nothing but a pitiful Image of their own pitiful Self, with its vanities, and grudgings, and ravenous hunger of all kinds, hangs forever painted in the retina of these unfortunate persons ; so that the starry ALL, with whatsoever it embraces, does but appear as some expanded magic-lantern shadow of that same Image,—and naturally looks pitiful enough.

The stupidest of you has a certain faculty ; were it but that of articulate speech (say, in the Scottish, the Irish, the Cockney dialect, or even in 'Governess-English'), and of physically discerning what lies under your nose. The stupidest of you would perhaps grudge to be compared in faculty with James Boswell ; yet see what he has produced ! You do not use your faculty honestly ; your heart is shut up ; full of greediness, malice, discontent ; so your intellectual sense cannot be open. It is vain also to urge that James Boswell had opportunities ; saw great men and great things, such as you can never hope to look on. What make ye of Parson White in Selborne ? He had not only no great men to look on, but not even men ; merely sparrows and cock-chafers : yet has he left us a *Biography* of these ; which, under its title *Natural History of Selborne*, still remains valuable to us ; which has copied a little sentence or two *faithfully* from the Inspired Volume of Nature, and so is itself not without inspiration. Go ye and do likewise. Sweep away utterly all frothiness and falsehood from your heart ; struggle unweariedly to acquire, what is possible for every god-created Man, a free, open, humble soul : *speak not at all, in any wise.*

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till you have somewhat to speak ; care not for the *reward* of your speaking, but simply and with undivided mind for the *truth* of your speaking : then be placed in what section of Space and of Time soever, do but open your eyes, and they shall actually *see*, and bring you real *knowledge*, wondrous worthy of *belief* ; and instead of one Boswell and one White, the world will rejoice in a thousand,—stationed on their thousand several watch-towers, to instruct us by indubitable documents, of whatsoever in our so stupendous World comes to light and *is* ! O, had the Editor of this Magazine but a magic rod to turn all that not inconsiderable Intellect, which now deluges us with artificial fictitious soap-lather, and mere Lying, into the faithful study of Reality,—what knowledge of great, everlasting Nature, and of Man's ways and doings therein, would not every year bring us in ! Can we but change one single soap-latherer and mountebank Juggler, into a true Thinker and Doer, who even *tries* honestly to think and do,—great will be our reward.

But to return ; or rather from this point to begin our journey ! If now, what with Herr Sauerteig's *Springwurzeln*, what with so much lucubration of our own, it has become apparent how deep, immeasurable is the 'worth that lies in *Reality*,' and farther, how exclusive the interest which man takes in Histories of Man,—may it not seem lamentable, that so few genuinely good *Biographies* have yet been accumulated in Literature ; that in the whole world, one cannot find, going strictly to work, above some dozen, or baker's dozen, and those chiefly of very ancient date ? Lamentable ; yet, after what we have just seen, accountable. Another question might be asked : How comes it that in England we have simply one good Biography, this *Boswell's Johnson* ; and of good,

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indifferent, or even bad attempts at Biography, fewer than any civilised people? Consider the French and Germans, with their Moreris, Bayles, Jordenses, Jochers, their innumerable *Memoires*, and *Schilderungen*, and *Biographies Universelles*; not to speak of Rousseaus, Goethes, Schubarths, Jung-Stillings; and then contrast with these our poor Birches and Kippises and Pecks; the whole breed of whom, moreover, is now extinct!

With this question, as the answer might lead us far, and come out unflattering to patriotic sentiment, we shall not intermeddle; but turn rather, with great pleasure, to the fact, that one excellent Biography *is* actually English;—and even now lies, in Five new Volumes, at our hand, soliciting a new consideration from us; such as, age after age (the Perennial showing ever new phases as *our* position alters), it may long be profitable to bestow on it;—to which task we here, in this position, in this age, gladly address ourselves.

First, however, let the foolish April-fool Day pass by; and our Reader, during these twenty-nine days of uncertain weather that will follow, keep pondering, according to convenience, the purport of BIOGRAPHY in general: then, with the blessed dew of May-day, and in unlimited convenience of space, shall all that we have written on *Johnson* and *Boswell's Johnson* and *Croker's Boswell's Johnson* be faithfully laid before him.

Thomas Carlyle

V

ATHENIAN ORATORY

"To the famous orators repair,
 Those ancient, whose resistless eloquence
 Wielded at will that fierce democratic,
 Shook the arsenal, and fulminated over Greece
 To Macedon and Artaxerxes' throne."

—*Milton.*

THE celebrity of the great classical writers is confined within no limits, except those which separate civilised from savage man. Their works are the common property of every polished nation. They have furnished subjects for the painter, and models for the poet. In the minds of the educated classes throughout Europe, their names are indissolubly associated with the endearing recollections of childhood, the old school-room, the dog-eared grammar, the first prize, the tears so often shed and so quickly dried. So great is the veneration with which they are regarded, that even the editors and commentators who perform the lowest menial offices to their memory, are considered, like the equerries and chamberlains of sovereign princes, as entitled to a high rank in the table of literary precedence. It is, therefore, somewhat singular that their productions should so rarely have been examined on just and philosophical principles of criticism.

✧ The ancient writers themselves afford us but little assistance. When they particularise, they are commonly trivial: when they would generalise, they become indistinct. An exception must, indeed, be made in favour of Aristotle. Both in analysis and in combination, that great man was without a rival. No philosopher has ever possessed, in an 'equal degree, the talent either of separating established systems into their primary elements, or of

connecting detached phenomena in harmonious systems. He was the great fashioner of the intellectual chaos ; he changed its darkness into light, and its discord into order. He brought to literary researches the same vigour and amplitude of mind to which both physical and metaphysical science are so greatly indebted. His fundamental principles of criticism are excellent. To cite only a single instance :—the doctrine which he established, that poetry is an imitative art, when justly understood, is to the critic what the compass is to the navigator. With it he may venture upon the most extensive excursions. Without it he must creep cautiously along the coast, or lose himself in a trackless expanse, and trust, at best, to the guidance of an occasional star. It is a discovery which changes a caprice into a science.

The general propositions of Aristotle are valuable. But the merit of the superstructure bears no proportion to that of the foundation. This is partly to be ascribed to the character of the philosopher, who, though qualified to do all that could be done by the resolving and combining powers of the understanding, seems not to have possessed much of sensibility or imagination. Partly, also, it may be attributed to the deficiency of materials. The great works of genius which then existed were not either sufficiently numerous or sufficiently varied to enable any man to form a perfect code of literature. To require that a critic should conceive classes of composition which had never existed, and then investigate their principles, would be as unreasonable as the demand of Nebuchadnezzar, who expected his magicians first to tell him his dream and then to interpret it.

With all his deficiencies, Aristotle was the most enlightened and profound critic of antiquity. Dionysius

was far from possessing the same exquisite subtilty, or the same vast comprehension. But he had access to a much greater number of specimens ; and he had devoted himself, as it appears, more exclusively to the study of elegant literature. His peculiar judgments are of more value than his general principles. He is only the historian of literature. Aristotle is its philosopher.

X Quintilian applied to general literature the same principles by which he had been accustomed to judge of the declamations of his pupils. He looks for nothing but rhetoric, and rhetoric not of the highest order. He speaks coldly of the incomparable works of *Æschylus*. He admires, beyond expression, those inexhaustible mines of common-places, the plays of *Euripides*. He bestows a few vague words on the poetical character of *Homer*. He then proceeds to consider him merely as an orator. An orator *Homer* doubtless was, and a great orator. But surely nothing is more remarkable, in his admirable works, than the art with which his oratorical powers are made subservient to the purposes of poetry. Nor can I think Quintilian a great critic in his own province. Just as are many of his remarks, beautiful as are many of his illustrations, we can perpetually detect in his thoughts that flavour which the soil of despotism generally communicates to all the fruits of genius. Eloquence was, in his time, little more than a condiment which served to stimulate in a despot the jaded appetite for panegyric, an amusement for the travelled nobles and the blue-stocking matrons of Rome. It is, therefore, with him, rather a sport than a war ; it is a contest of foils, not of swords. He appears to think more of the grace of the attitude than of the direction and vigour of the thrust. It must be acknowledged, in justice to Quintilian, that this is an error to which Cicero has too often

given the sanction, both of his precept and of his example.

X Longinus seems to have had great sensibility, but little discrimination. He gives us eloquent sentences, but no principles. It was happily said that Montesquieu ought to have changed the name of his book from *L'Esprit des Lois* to *L'Esprit sur les Lois*. In the same manner the philosopher of Palmyra ought to have entitled his famous work, not *Longinus on the Sublime*, but *The Sublimities of Longinus*. The origin of the sublime is one of the most curious and interesting subjects of inquiry that can occupy the attention of a critic. In our own country it has been discussed, with great ability, and, I think, with very little success, by Burke and Dugald Stuart. Longinus dispenses himself from all investigations of this nature, by telling his friend Terentianus that he already knows everything that can be said upon the question. It is to be regretted that Terentianus did not impart some of his knowledge to his instructor: for from Longinus we learn only that sublimity means height, or elevation. This name, so commodiously vague, is applied indifferently to the noble prayer of Ajax in the *Iliad*, and to a passage of Plato about the human body, as full of conceits as an ode of Cowley. Having no fixed standard, Longinus is right only by accident. He is rather a fancier than a critic.

Modern writers have been prevented by many causes from supplying the deficiencies of their classical predecessors. At the time of the revival of literature, no man could, without great and painful labour, acquire an accurate and elegant knowledge of the ancient languages. And, unfortunately, those grammatical and philological studies, without which it was impossible to understand the great works of Athenian and Roman genius, have a tendency to contract the views and deaden the sensibility of those who

follow them with exteme assiduity. A powerful mind, which has been long employed in such studies, may be compared to the gigantic spirit in the Arabian tale, who was persuaded to contract himself to small dimensions in order to enter within the enchanted vessel, and, when his prison had been closed upon him, found himself unable to escape from the narrow boundaries to the measure of which he had reduced his stature. When the means have long been the objects of application, they are naturally substituted for the end. It was said, by Eugene of Savoy, that the greatest generals have commonly been those who have been at once raised to command, and introduced to the great operations of war, without being employed in the petty calculations and manœuvres which employ the time of an inferior officer. In literature the principle is equally sound. The great tactics of criticism will, in general, be best understood by those who have not had much practice in drilling syllables and particles.

X I remember to have observed among the French Anas a ludicrous instance of this. A scholar, doubtless of great learning, recommends the study of some long Latin treatise, of which I now forget the name, on the religion, manners, government, and language of the early Greeks. "For there," says he, "you will learn everything of importance that is contained in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, without the trouble of reading two such tedious books." Alas ! it had not occurred to the poor gentleman that all the knowledge to which he attached so much value was useful only as it illustrated the great poems which he despised, and would be as worthless for any other purpose as the mythology of Caffraria, or the vocabulary of Otaheite.

Of those scholars who have disdained to confine themselves to verbal criticism few have been successful. The ancient languages have, generally, a magical influence on their faculties. They were "fools called into a circle by Greek invocations." The *Iliad* and *Æneid* were to them not books but curiosities, or rather reliques. They no more admired these works for their merits than a good Catholic venerates the house of the Virgin at Loretto for its architecture. Whatever was classical was good. Homer was a great poet, and so was Callimachus. The epistles of Cicero were fine, and so were those of Phalaris. Even with respect to questions of evidence they fell into the same error. The authority of all narrations, written in Greek or Latin, was the same with them. It never crossed their minds that the lapse of five hundred years, or the distance of five hundred leagues, could affect the accuracy of a narration; that Livy could be a less veracious historian than Polybius; or that Plutarch could know less about the friends of Xenophon than Xenophon himself. Deceived by the distance of time, they seem to consider all the classics as contemporaries; just as I have known people in England, deceived by the distance of place, take it for granted that all persons who live in India are neighbours, and ask an inhabitant of Bombay about the health of an acquaintance at Calcutta. It is to be hoped that no barbarian deluge will ever again pass over Europe. But should such a calamity happen, it seems not improbable that some future Rollin or Gillies will compile a history of England from Miss Porter's *Scottish Chiefs*, Miss Lee's *Recess*, and Sir Nathaniel Wraxall's *Memoirs*.

It is surely time that ancient literature should be examined in a different manner, without pedantical

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prepossessions, but with a just allowance, at the same time, for the difference of circumstances and manners. I am far from pretending to the knowledge or ability which such a task would require. All that I mean to offer is a collection of desultory remarks upon a most interesting portion of Greek literature.

It may be doubted whether any compositions which have ever been produced in the world are equally perfect in their kind with the great Athenian orations. Genius is subject to the same laws which regulate the production of cotton and molasses. The supply adjusts itself to the demand. The quantity may be diminished by restrictions, and multiplied by bounties. The singular excellence to which eloquence attained at Athens to be mainly attributed to the influence which it exerted there. In turbulent times, under a constitution purely democratic, among a people educated exactly to that point at which men are most susceptible of strong and sudden impressions, acute, but not sound reasoners, warm in their feelings, unfixed in their principles, and passionate admirers of fine composition, oratory received such encouragement as it has never since obtained.

The taste and knowledge of the Athenian people was a favourite object of the contemptuous derision of Samuel Johnson; a man who knew nothing of Greek literature beyond the common school-books, and who seems to have brought to what he had read scarcely more than the discernment of a common school-boy. He used to assert, with that arrogant absurdity which, in spite of his great abilities and virtues, renders him, perhaps, the most ridiculous character in literary history, that Demosthenes spoke to a people of brutes; to a barbarous people; that there could have been no civilisation before the invention

of printing. Johnson was a keen but a very narrow-minded observer of mankind. He perpetually confounded their general nature with their particular circumstances. He knew London intimately. The sagacity of his remarks on its society is perfectly astonishing. But Fleet Street was the world to him. He saw that Londoners who did not read were profoundly ignorant ; and he inferred that a Greek, who had few or no books, must have been as uninformed as one of Mr. Thrale's draymen.

There seems to be, on the contrary, every reason to believe, that, in general intelligence, the Athenian populace far surpassed the lower orders of any community that has ever existed. It must be considered, that to be a citizen was to be a legislator, a soldier, a judge, one upon whose voice might depend the fate of the wealthiest tributary state, of the most eminent public man. The lowest offices, both of agriculture and of trade, were in common, performed by slaves. The commonwealth supplied its meanest members with the support of life; the opportunity of leisure, and the means of amusement. Books were indeed few ; but they were excellent ; and they were accurately known. It is not by turning over libraries, but by repeatedly perusing and intently contemplating a few great models, that the mind is best disciplined. A man of letters must now read much that he soon forgets, and much from which he learns nothing worthy to be remembered. The best works employ, in general, but a small portion of his time. Demosthenes is said to have transcribed six times the history of Thucydides. If he had been a young politician of the present age, he might in the same space of time have skimmed innumerable newspapers and pamphlets. Rumford, it is said, proposed to the Elector of Bavaria a scheme for

feeding his soldiers at a much cheaper rate than formerly. His plan was simply to compel them to masticate their food thoroughly. A small quantity, thus eaten, would, according to that famous projector, afford more sustenance than a large meal hastily devoured. I do not know how Rumford's proposition was received: but to the mind, I believe, it will be found more nutritious to digest a page than to devour a volume.

Books, however, were the least part of the education of an Athenian citizen. Let us, for a moment, transport ourselves in thought, to that glorious city. Let us imagine that we are entering its gates, in the time of its power and glory. A crowd is assembled round a portico. All are gazing with delight at the entablature; for Phidias is putting up the frieze. We turn into another street: a rhapsodist is reciting there: men, women, children are thronging round him: the tears are running down their cheeks: their eyes are fixed: their very breath is still: for he is telling how Priam fell at the feet of Achilles, and kissed those hands—the terrible, the murderous—which had slain so many of his sons. We enter the public place; there is a ring of youths, all leaning forward, with sparkling eyes, and gestures of expectation. Socrates is pitted against the famous atheist, from Ionia, and has just brought him to a contradiction in terms. But we are interrupted. The herald is crying, "Room for the Prytanes." The general assembly is to meet. The people are swarming in on every side. Proclamation is made, "Who wishes to speak?" There is a shout, and a clapping of hands: Pericles is mounting the stand. Then for a play of Sophocles; and away to sup with Aspasia. I know of no modern university which has so excellent a system of education.

Knowledge thus acquired and opinions thus formed were, indeed, likely to be, in some respects, defective. To the conversational education of the Athenians I am inclined to attribute the great looseness of reasoning which is remarkable in most of their scientific writings. Even the most illogical of modern writers would stand perfectly aghast at the puerile fallacies which seem to have deluded some of the greatest men of antiquity. Sir Thomas Lethbridge would stare at the political economy of Xenophon; and the author of *Soirees de Petersbourg* would be ashamed of some of the metaphysical arguments of Plato. But the very circumstances which retarded the growth of science were peculiarly favourable to the cultivation of eloquence. From the early habit of taking a share in animated discussion the intelligent student would derive that readiness of resource, that copiousness of language, and that knowledge of the temper and understanding of an audience, which are far more valuable to an orator than the greatest logical powers.

Horace has prettily compared poems to those paintings of which the effect varies as the spectator changes his stand. The same remark applies with at least equal justice to speeches. They must be read with the temper of those to whom they were addressed, or they must necessarily appear to offend against laws of taste and reason; as the finest picture, seen in a light different from that for which it was designed, will appear fit only for a sign. This is perpetually forgotten by those who criticise oratory. Because they are reading at leisure, pausing at every line, reconsidering every argument; they forget that the hearers were hurried from point to point too rapidly to detect the fallacies through which they were conducted; that they had no time to disentangle sophisms,

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or to notice slight inaccuracies of expression; that elaborate excellence, either of reasoning or of language, would have been absolutely thrown away. To recur to the analogy of the sister art, these connoisseurs examine a panorama through a microscope, and quarrel with a scene-painter because he does not give to his work the exquisite finish of Gerard Dow.

Oratory is to be estimated on principles different from those which are applied to other productions. Truth is the object of philosophy and history. Truth is the object even of those works which are peculiarly called works of fiction, but which, in fact, bear the same relation to history which algebra bears to arithmetic. The merit of poetry, in its wildest forms, still consists in its truth, truth conveyed to the understanding, not directly by the words, but circuitously by means of imaginative associations, which serve as its conductors. The object of oratory alone is not truth, but persuasion. The admiration of the multitude does not make Moore a greater poet than Coleridge, or Beattie a greater philosopher than Berkeley. But the criterion of eloquence is different. A speaker who exhausts the whole philosophy of a question, who displays every grace of style, yet produces no effect on his audience, may be a great essayist, a great statesman, a great master of composition; but he is not an orator. If he miss the mark, it makes no difference whether he have taken aim too high or too low.

The effect of the great freedom of the press in England has been, in a great measure, to destroy this distinction, and to leave among us little of what I call oratory proper. Our legislators, our candidates, on great occasions even our advocates, address themselves less to the audience

than to the reporters. They think less of the few hearers than of the innumerable readers. At Athens the case was different: there the only object of the speaker was immediate conviction and persuasion. He, therefore, who would justly appreciate the merit of the Grecian orators should place himself, as nearly as possible, in the situation of their auditors: he should divest himself of his modern feelings and acquirements, and make the prejudices and interests of the Athenian citizen his own. He who studies their works in this spirit will find that many of those things which, to an English reader, appear to be blemishes—the frequent violation of those excellent rules of evidence by which our courts of law are regulated, the introduction of extraneous matter, the reference to considerations of political expediency in judicial investigations, the assertions, without proof, the passionate entreaties, the furious invectives—are really proofs of the prudence and address of the speakers. He must not dwell maliciously on arguments or phrases, but acquiesce in his first impressions. It requires repeated perusal and reflection to decide rightly on any other portion of literature. But with respect to works of which the merit depends on their instantaneous effect the most hasty judgment is likely to be best.

The history of eloquence at Athens is remarkable. From a very early period great speakers had flourished there. Pisistratus and Themistocles are said to have owed much of their influence to their talents for debate. We learn, with more certainty, that Pericles was distinguished by extraordinary oratorical powers. The substance of some of his speeches is transmitted to us by Thucydides; and that excellent writer has doubtless faithfully reported

the general line of his arguments. But the manner, which in oratory is of at least as much consequence as the matter, was of no importance to his narration. It is evident that he has not attempted to preserve it. Throughout his work, every speech on every subject, whatever may have been the character of the dialect of the speaker, is in exactly the same form. The grave king of Sparta, the furious demagogue of Athens, the general encouraging his army, the captive supplicating for his life, all are represented as speakers in one unvaried style, a style moreover wholly unfit for oratorical purposes. His mode of reasoning is singularly elliptical, in reality most consecutive, yet in appearance often incoherent. His meaning, in itself sufficiently perplexing, is compressed into the fewest possible words. His great fondness for antithetical expression has not a little conduced to this effect. Every one must have observed how much more the sense is condensed in the verses of Pope and his imitators, who never ventured to continue the same clause from couplet to couplet, than in those of poets who allow themselves that license. Every artificial division, which is strongly marked, and which frequently recurs, has the same tendency. The natural and perspicuous expression which spontaneously rises to the mind will often refuse to accommodate itself to such a form. It is necessary either to expand it into weakness, or to compress it into almost impenetrable density. The latter is generally the choice of an able man, and was assuredly the choice of Thucydides.

It is scarcely necessary to say that such speeches could never have been delivered. They are perhaps among the most difficult passages in the Greek language, and would probably have been scarcely more intelligible to an Athenian auditor than to a modern reader. Their obscurity

was acknowledged by Cicero, who was as intimate with the literature and language of Greece as the most accomplished of its natives, and who seems to have held a respectable rank among the Greek authors. Their difficulty to a modern reader lies, not in the words, but in the reasoning. A dictionary is of far less use in studying them than a clear head and a close attention to the context. They are valuable to the scholar as displaying, beyond almost any other compositions, the powers of the finest of languages : they are valuable to the philosopher as illustrating the morals and manners of a most interesting age : they abound in just thought and energetic expression. But they do not enable us to form any accurate opinion on the merits of the early Greek orators.

✓ Though it cannot be doubted that, before the Persian wars, Athens had produced eminent speakers, yet the period during which eloquence most flourished among the citizens was by no means that of her greatest power and glory. It commenced at the close of the Peloponnesian war. In fact, the steps by which Athenian oratory approached to its finished excellence seem to have been almost contemporaneous with those by which the Athenian character and the Athenian empire sunk to degradation. At the time when the little commonwealth achieved those victories which twenty-five eventful centuries have left unequalled, eloquence was in its infancy. The deliverers of Greece became its plunderers and oppressors. Unmeasured exaction, atrocious vengeance, the madness of the multitude, the tyranny of the great, filled the Cyclades with tears, and blood, and mourning. The sword unpeopled whole islands in a day. The plough passed over the ruins of famous cities. The imperial republic sent forth her children by thousands to pine in the quar-

ries of Syracuse, or to feed the vultures of *Ægospotami*. She was at length reduced by famine and slaughter to humble herself before her enemies, and to purchase existence by the sacrifice of her empire and her laws. During these disastrous and gloomy years, oratory was advancing towards its highest excellence. And it was when the moral, the political, and the military character of the people was most utterly degraded, it was when the viceroy of a Macedonian sovereign gave law to Greece, that the courts of Athens witnessed the most splendid contest of eloquence that the world has ever known.

The causes of this phenomenon it is not, I think, difficult to assign. The division of labour operates on the productions of the orator as it does on those of the mechanic. It was remarked by the ancients that the Pentathlete, who divided his attention between several exercises, though he could not vie with a boxer in the use of the cestus, or with one who had confined his attention to running in the contest of the stadium, yet enjoyed far greater general vigour and health than either. It is the same with the mind. The superiority in technical skill is often more than compensated by the inferiority in general intelligence. And this is peculiarly the case in politics. States have always been best governed by men who have taken a wide view of public affairs, and who have rather a general acquaintance with many sciences than a perfect mastery of one. The union of the political and military departments in Greece contributed not a little to the splendour of its early history. After their separation more skilful generals and greater speakers appeared; but the breed of statesmen dwindled and became almost extinct. Themistocles or Pericles would have been no match for Demosthenes in the assembly, or for Iphicrates in the field.

But surely they were incomparably better fitted than either for the supreme direction of affairs.

There is indeed a remarkable coincidence between the progress of the art of war, and that of the art of oratory, among the Greeks. They both advanced to perfection by contemporaneous steps, and from similar causes. The early speakers, like the early warriors of Greece, were merely a militia. It was found that in both employments practice and discipline gave superiority. Each pursuit therefore became first an art, and then a trade. In proportion as the professors of each became more expert in their particular craft, they became less respectable in their general character. Their skill had been obtained at too great expense to be employed only from disinterested views. Thus, the soldiers forgot that they were citizens, and the orators that they were statesmen. I know not to what Demosthenes and his famous contemporaries can be so justly compared as to those mercenary troops who, in their time, over-ran Greece; or those who, from similar causes, were some centuries ago the scourge of the Italian republics—perfectly acquainted with every part of their profession, irresistible in the field, powerful to defend or to destroy, but defending without love, and destroying without hatred. We may despise the characters of these political *Condottieri*; but it is impossible to examine the system of their tactics without being amazed at its perfection.

I had intended to proceed to this examination, and to consider separately the remains of Lysias, of Æschines, of Demosthenes, and of Isocrates, who, though strictly speaking he was rather a pamphleteer than an orator, deserves,

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on many accounts, a place in such a disquisition. The length of my prolegomena and digressions compels me to postpone this part of the subject to another occasion.

Lord Macaulay.

VI

DOWNFALL OF ANCIENT CIVILISATION

THERE never was, perhaps, in the history of this tumultuous world, prosperity so great, so far-spreading, so lasting, as that which began throughout the vast Empire of Rome at the time when the Prince of Peace was born into it. Preternatural as was the tyranny of certain of the Cæsars, it did not reach the mass of the population; and the reigns of the Five good Emperors, who succeeded them, are proverbs of wise and gentle government. The sole great exception to this universal happiness was the cruel persecution of the Christians; the sufferings of a whole world fell and were concentrated on them, and the children of heaven were tormented that the sons of men might enjoy their revel. Their Lord, while His shadow brought peace upon earth, foretold that in the event He came to send "not peace but a sword;" and that sword was first let loose upon His own. "Judgment commenced with the House of God;" and though, as time went on, it issued forth from Jerusalem, and began to career round the world and sweep the nations as it travelled on, nevertheless, as if by some paradox of Providence, it seemed still that truth and wretchedness had "met together," and sin and civilisation had "kissed one another." The more the heathens prospered, the more they scorned, hated, and persecuted the true Light and true Peace. They persecuted Him for the very reason that they had little else to do; happy and haughty, they saw in Him the sole drawback, the sole exception, the sole hindrance to a universal, a continual sunshine; they called Him "the enemy of the human race:" and they felt themselves bound, by their loyalty to the glorious and

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immortal memory of their forefathers, by their traditions of state, and their duties towards their children, to trample upon, and, if they could, to stifle that teaching, which was destined to be the life and mould of a new world.

But our immediate subject here is, not Christianity, but the world that passed away ; and before it passed, it had, I say, a tranquillity great in proportion to its former commotions. Ages of trouble terminated in two centuries of peace. It required the events of two thousand years, the multiform fortunes of tribes and populations, the rise and fall of kings, the mutual collision of states, the spread of colonies, the vicissitude and the succession of conquests, and the gradual adjustment and settlement of innumerable discordant ideas and interests, to carry on the human race to unity, and to shape and consolidate the great Roman Power.

And when once those unwieldy materials were welded together into one mass, what human force could split them up again ? what "hammer of the earth" could shiver at a stroke a solidity which it had taken ages to form ? Who can estimate the strength of a political establishment, which has been the slow birth of time ? and what establishment ever equalled Pagan Rome ? Hence has come the proverb, "Rome was not built in a day": it was the portentous solidity of its power that forced the gazer back upon an exclamation, which was the relief of his astonishment, as being his solution of the prodigy. And, when at length it was built, Rome, so long in building, was "Eternal Rome" : it had been done once for all ; its being was inconceivable beforehand, and its not being was inconceivable afterwards. To remove it from its place was to cast a mountain into the sea. Look at the Palatine

Hill, penetrated, traversed, cased with brick-work, till it appears a work of man, not of nature ; run your eye along the cliffs from Ostia to Terracina, covered with the debris of masonry ; gaze around the bay of Baiæ, whose rocks have been made to serve as the foundations and the walls of palaces ; and in those mere remains, lasting to this day, you will have a type of the moral and political strength of the establishments of Rome. Think of the aqueducts making for the imperial city for miles across the plain ; think of the straight roads stretching off again from that one centre to the ends of the earth ; consider the vast territory round about it strewn to this day with countless ruins ; follow in your minds its suburbs, extending along its roads, for as much, at least in some directions, as forty miles ; and number up its continuous mass of population, amounting, as grave authors say, to almost six million ; and answer the question, how was Rome ever to be got rid of ? why was it not to progress ? why was it not to progress for ever ? where was that ancient civilisation to end ? Such were the questionings and anticipations of thoughtful minds, not over loyal or fond of Rome. "The world," says Tertullian, "has more of cultivation every day, and is better furnished than in times of old. All places are opened up now ; all are familiarly known ; all are scenes of business. Smiling farms have obliterated the notorious wilderness : tillage has tamed the forest land ; flocks have put to flight the beasts of prey. Sandy tracts are sown ; rocks are put into shape ; marshes are drained. There are more cities now, than there were cottages at one time. Islands are no longer wild ; the crag no longer frightful ; everywhere there is a home, a population, a state, and a livelihood." Such was the prosperity, such the promise of progress and permanence, in which the Assyrian, the

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Persian, the Greek, the Macedonian conquests had terminated.

Education had gone through a similar course of difficulties, and had a place in the prosperous result. It received the means, at the date of Alexander and his successors, both of its cultivation and its propagation. It was formally recognised and endowed under the Ptolemies, and at length became a direct object of the solicitude of the Government under the Cæsars. It was honoured and dispensed in every considerable city of the Empire; it tempted the political administration of the conquering people; it civilised the manners of a hundred barbarian conquests; it gradually reconciled uncongenial, and associated distant countries, with each other; while it had ever ministered to the fine arts, it now proceeded to subserve the useful. It took in hand the reformation of the world's religion; it began to harmonise the legends of discordant worships; it purified the mythology by making it symbolical; it interpreted it, and gave it a moral, and explained away its idolatry. It began to develop a system of ethics, it framed a code of laws: what might not be expected of it, as time went on, were it not for that illiberal, unintelligible, fanatical, abominable sect of Galileans? If they were allowed to make play, and get power, what might not happen? There again Christians were in the way, as hateful to the philosopher as to the statesman. Yet truly it was not in this quarter that the peril of civilisation lay: it lay in a very different direction, over against the Empire to the North and North-East, in a black cloud of inexhaustible barbarian populations: and when the storm mounted overhead and broke upon the earth, it was those scorned and detested Galileans, and none but they, the men-haters and god-despisers, who, returning good for evil

housed and lodged the scattered remnants of that world's wisdom, which had so persecuted them, went forth valiantly to meet the savage destroyer, tamed him without arms, and became the founders of a new and higher civilisation. Not a man in Europe now who talks bravely against the Church, but owes it to the Church that he can talk at all.

But what was to be the process, what the method, what the instruments, what the place, for sheltering the treasures of ancient intellect during the convulsion of bridging over the abyss, and of linking the old world to the new? In spite of the consolidation of its power, Rome was to go, as all things human go, and vanish for ever. In the words of inspiration, "Great Babylon came in remembrance before God, and every island fled away, and the mountains were not found." All the fury of the elements was directed against it; and, as a continual dropping wears away the stone, so blow after blow, and convulsion after convulsion, sufficed at last to heave up, and hurl down, and smash into fragments, the noblest earthly power that ever was. First came the Goth, then the Hun, and then the Lombard. The Goth took possession, but he was of noble nature, and soon lost his barbarism. The Hun came next; he was irreclaimable, but did not stay. The Lombard kept both his savageness and his ground; he appropriated to himself the territory, not the civilisation of Italy, fierce as the Hun, and powerful as the Goth, the most tremendous scourge of Heaven. In his dark presence the poor remains of Greek and Roman splendour died away, and the world went more rapidly to ruin, material and moral, than it was advancing from triumph to triumph in the time of Tertullian. Alas! the change between Rome in the hey-day of her pride, and in the agony of her judgment! Tertullian writes whiles she is exalted;

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Pope Gregory when she is in humiliation. He was delivering homilies upon the Prophet Ezekiel when the news came to Rome of the advance of the Lombards upon it, and in the course of them he several times burst out into lamentations at the news of miseries, which eventually obliged him to cut short his exposition.

"Sights and sounds of war," he says, "meet us on every side. The cities are destroyed; the military stations broken up; the land devastated; the earth depopulated. No one remains in the country; scarcely any inhabitants in the towns; yet even the poor remains of human kind are still smitten daily and without intermission. Before our eyes some are carried away captive, some mutilated, some murdered. She herself, who once was mistress of the world, we behold how Rome fares: worn down by manifold and incalculable distresses, the bereavement of citizens, the attack of foes, the reiteration of overthrows, where is her senate? where are her people? We, the few survivors, are still the daily prey of the sword and of other innumerable tribulations. Where are they who in a former day revelled in her glory? where is their pomp, their pride, their frequent and immoderate joy? Youngsters, young men of the world, congregated here from every quarter, where they aimed at a secular advancement. Now no one hastens up to her for preferment; and the case is the same in other cities also; some places are laid waste by pestilence, others are depopulated by the sword, others are tormented by famine, and others are swallowed up by earthquakes."

In the dreadful age of that great Pope (St. Gregory), a plague spread from the lowlands of Egypt to the Indies on the one hand, along Africa across to Spain on the other,

till, reversing its course, it reached the eastern extremity of Europe. For fifty-two years did it retain possession of the infected atmosphere, and, during three months, five thousand, and at length ten thousand persons are said to have died daily in Constantinople. Many cities of the East were left without inhabitants; and in several districts of Italy there were no labourers to attend either harvest or vintage. A succession of earthquakes accompanied for years this heavy calamity. Constantinople was shaken for above forty days. Two hundred and fifty thousand persons are said to have perished in the earthquake of Antioch, crowded, as the city was, with strangers for the festival of the Ascension. Berytus, the Eastern school of Roman jurisprudence, called, from its literary and scientific importance, the eye of Phœnicia, shared a similar fate. These, however, were but local visitations. The barbarian invaders, spreading over the country like a flight of locusts, did their best to destroy every fragment of the old world, and every element of revival. Twenty-nine public libraries had been founded at Rome; but, had these been destroyed, as in Antioch or Berytus, by earthquakes or by conflagration, yet a large aggregate of books would have still survived. Such collections had become a fashion and a luxury in the later Empire, and every colony and municipium, every larger temple, every prætorium, the baths, and the private villas, had their respective libraries. When the ruin swept across the country, and these various libraries were destroyed, then the patient monks had begun again, in their quiet dwellings, to bring together, to arrange, to transcribe, and to catalogue; but then again the new visitation of the Lombards fell, and Monte Cassino, the famous metropolis of the Benedictines, not to mention monasteries of lesser note, was sacked and destroyed.

DOWNFALL OF ANCIENT CIVILISATION

Truly was Christianity revenged on that ancient civilisation for the persecution which it had inflicted on Christianity. Man ceased from the earth, and his works with him. The arts of life, architecture, engineering, agriculture, were alike brought to nought. The waters were let out over the face of the country ; arable and pasture lands were drowned ; landmarks disappeared. The dwindled race of man lived in scattered huts of mud, where best they might avoid marauder, and pestilence, and inundation ; or clung together for mutual defence in cities, where wretched cottages, on the ruins of marble palaces, overbalanced the security of numbers by the frequency of conflagration.

In such a state of things, the very mention of education was a mockery ; the very aim and effort to exist was occupation enough for mind and body. The heads of the Church bewailed a universal ignorance, which they could not remedy ; it was a great thing that schools remained sufficient for clerical education, and this education was only sufficient, as Pope Agatho informs us, to enable them to hand on the traditions of the Fathers, without scientific exposition or polemical defence. In that Pope's time, the great Council of Rome, in its letter to the Emperor of the East, who had asked for Episcopal legates of correct life and scientific knowledge of the Scriptures, made answer, that, if by science was meant knowledge of revealed truth, the demand could be supplied ; not, if more was required ; "since," continue the Fathers, "in these parts, the fury of our various heathen foes is ever breaking out, whether in conflicts, or in inroads and rapine. Hence our life is simply one of anxiety of soul and labour of body : anxiety, because we are in the midst of the heathen ; labour, because the maintenance which

used to come to us as ecclesiastics, is at an end ; so that faith is our only substance, to live in its possession our highest glory, to die for it our eternal gain." The very profession of the clergy is the knowledge of letters ; if even these lost it, would others retain it in their miseries, to whom it was no duty ? And what then was the hope and prospect of the world in the generations which were to follow ?

"What is coming ? what is to be the end ?" Such was the question which weighed so heavily upon the august line of Pontiffs, upon whom rested "the solicitude of all the churches," and whose failure in vigilance and decision in that miserable time had been the loss of ancient learning, and the indefinite postponement of new civilisation. What could be done for art, science, and philosophy, when towns had been burned up, and country devastated ? In such distress, islands, or deserts, or the mountain-top have commonly been the retreat to which in the last instance the hopes of humanity have been conveyed. Thus the Christian Goths were just then biding their time to revenge themselves on the Saracens in the mountains of Asturias ; so too the monks of the fourth century had preserved the Catholic faith from the tyranny of Arianism in the Egyptian desert ; and so the inhabitants of Lombardy had taken refuge from the Huns in the shallows of the Adriatic. Where should the Steward of the Household deposit the riches which his predecessors had inherited from Jew and heathen, the things old as well as new, in an age in which each succeeding century threatened them with worse than the centuries which had gone before ! Pontiff after Pontiff looked out from the ruins of the Imperial City, which were to be his ever-lasting, ever-restless throne, if perchance some place was to be found, more

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tranquil than his own, where the hope of the future might be lodged. They looked over the Earth, towards great cities and far provinces, and whether it was Gregory, or Vitalian, or Agatho, or Leo, their eyes had all been drawn in one direction, and fixed upon one quarter for that purpose—not to the East, from which the light of knowledge had arisen, nor to the West, whither it had spread—but to the North.

High in the region of the North, beyond the just limits of the Roman world, though partly included in its range, so secluded and secure in their sea-encircled domain that they have been thought to be the fabulous Hesperides, where heroes dwelt in peace, lay two sister islands—whose names and histories, warned by my diminished space, I must reserve for another chapter.

J. H. Newman

VII

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WE are delicate machines, and require nice treatment to get from us the maximum of power and pleasure. We need tonics, but must have those that cost little or no reaction. The flame of life burns too fast in pure oxygen, and nature has tempered the air with nitrogen. So thought is the native air of the mind, yet pure it is a poison to our mixed constitution, and soon burns up the bone-house of man unless tempered with affection and coarse practice in the material world. Varied foods, climates, beautiful objects,—and especially the alternation of a large variety of objects,—are the necessity of this exigent system of ours. But our tonics, our luxuries, are force-pumps which exhaust the strength they pretend to supply; and of all the cordials known to us, the best, safest, and most exhilarating, with the least harm, is society; and every healthy and efficient mind passes a large part of life in the company most easy to him.

We seek society with very different aims, and the staple of conversation is widely unlike in its circles. Sometimes it is facts,—running from those of daily necessity to the last results of science,—and has all degrees of importance; sometimes it is love, and makes the balm of our early and of our latest days; sometimes it is thought, as from a person who is a mind only; sometimes a singing, as if the heart poured out all like a bird; sometimes experience. With some men it is a debate; at the approach of a dispute they neigh like horses. Unless there be an argument, they think nothing is doing. Some talkers excel in the precision with which they formulate their thoughts, so that you get from them somewhat to remember; others lay criticism

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asleep by a charm. Especially women use words that are not words,—as steps in a dance are not steps,—but reproduce the genius of that they speak of; as the sound of some bells makes us think of the bell merely, whilst the church-chimes in the distance bring the church and its serious memories before us. Opinions are accidental in people,—have a poverty-stricken air. A man valuing himself as the organ of this or that dogma is a dull companion enough; but opinion native to the speaker is sweet and refreshing, and inseparable from his image. Neither do we by any means always go to people for conversation. How often to say nothing;—and yet must go; as a child will long for his companions, but among them plays by himself. 'Tis only presence which we want. But one thing is certain,—at some rate, intercourse we must have. The experience of retired men is positive,—that we lose our days and are barren of thought for want of some person to talk with. The understanding can no more empty itself by its own action than can a deal box.

The clergyman walks from house to house all day all the year to give people the comfort of good talk. The physician helps them mainly in the same way, by healthy talk giving a right tone to the patient's mind. The dinner, the walk, the fireside, all have that for their main end.

See how Nature has secured the communication of knowledge. 'Tis certain that money does not more burn in a boy's pocket than a piece of news burns in our memory until we can tell it. And, in higher activity of mind, every new perception is attended with a thrill of pleasure, and the imparting of it to others is also attended with pleasure. Thought is the child of the intellect, and this child is conceived with joy and born with joy.

Conversation is the laboratory and workshop of the student. The affection or sympathy helps. The wish to speak to the want of another mind assists to clear your own. A certain truth possesses us, which we in all ways strive to utter. Every time we say a thing in conversation, we get a mechanical advantage in detaching it well and deliverly. I prize the mechanics of conversation. 'Tis pulley and lever and screw. To fairly disengage the mass, and send it jingling down, a good boulder,—a block of quartz and gold, to be worked up at leisure in the useful arts of life,—is a wonderful relief.

What are the best days in memory? Those in which we met a companion who was truly such. We remember the time when the best gift we could ask of fortune was to fall in with a valuable companion in a ship's cabin, or on a long journey in the old stage-coach, where, each passenger being forced to know every other, and other employments being out of question, conversation naturally flowed, people became rapidly acquainted, and, if well adapted, more intimate in a day than if they had been neighbours for years.

In youth, in the fury of curiosity and acquisition, the day is too short for books and the crowd of thoughts, and we are impatient of interruption. Later, when books tire, thought has a more languid flow; and the days come when we are alarmed, and say there are no thoughts. "What a barren-witted pate is mine!" the student says; "I will go and learn whether I have lost my reason." He seeks intelligent persons, whether more wise or less wise than he, who give him provocation, and at once and easily the old motion begins in his brain: thoughts, fancies, humours flow; the cloud lifts; the horizon broadens; and the infi-

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nite opulence of things is again shown him. But the right conditions must be observed. Mainly he must have leave to be himself. Sancho Panza blessed the man who invented sleep. So I prize the good invention whereby everybody is provided with somebody who is glad to see him.

If men are less when together than they are alone, they are also in some respects enlarged. They kindle each other. Every metaphysician must have observed, not only that no thought is alone, but that thoughts commonly go in pairs ; though the related thoughts first appeared in his mind at long distances of time. Things are in pairs : a natural fact has only half its value, until a fact in moral nature, its counterpart, is stated. Then they confirm and adorn each other ; a story is matched by another story. And that may be the reason why, when a gentleman has told a good thing, he immediately tells it again.

Nothing seems so cheap as the benefit of conversation : nothing is more rare. 'Tis wonderful how you are balked and baffled. There is plenty of intelligence, reading, curiosity ; but serious, happy discourse, avoiding personalities, dealing with results, is rare : and I seldom meet with a reading and thoughtful person but he tells me, as if it were his exceptional mishap, that he has no companion.

Suppose such a one to go out exploring different circles in search of this wise and genial counterpart—he might inquire far and wide. Conversation in society is found to be on a platform so low as to exclude science, the saint, and the poet. Amidst all the gay banter, sentiment cannot profane itself and venture out. The reply of old Isocrates comes so often to mind—"The things which are now seasonable I cannot say ; and for the things which I can say it is not now the time." Besides, who can resist the charm

of talent? The lover of letters loves power too. Among the men of wit and learning, he could not withhold his homage from the gaiety, grasp of memory, luck, splendour, and speed; such exploits of discourse, such feats of society! What new powers, what mines of wealth! But when he came home, his brave sequins were dry leaves. He found either that the fact they had thus dized and adorned was of no value, or that he already knew all and more than all they had told him. He could not find that he was helped by so much as one thought or principle, one solid fact, one commanding impulse; great was the dazzle, but the gain was small. He uses his occasions: he seeks the company of those who have convivial talent. But the moment they meet, to be sure they begin to be something else than they were; they play pranks, dance jigs, run on each other, pun, tell stories, try many fantastic tricks, under some superstition that there must be excitement and elevation;—and they kill conversation at once. I know well the rusticity of the shy hermit. No doubt he does not make allowance enough for men of more active blood and habit. But it is only on natural ground that conversation can be rich. It must not begin with uproar and violence. Let it keep the ground, let it feel the connection with the battery. Men must not be off their centres.

Some men love only to talk where they are masters. They like to go to school-girls, or to boys, or into the shops where the sauntering people gladly lend an ear to any one. They go rarely to their equals, and then as for their own convenience simply, making too much haste to introduce and impart their new whim or discovery; listen badly, or do not listen to the comment or to the thought by which the company strive to repay them; rather, as soon as their own speech is done, they take their hats. Then

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there are the gladiators, to whom it is always a battle; 'tis no matter on which side, they fight for victory; then the heady men, the egotists, the monotones, the steriles, and the impracticables.

It does not help that you find as good or a better man than yourself, if he is not timed and fitted to you. The greatest sufferers are often those who have the most to say,—men of a delicate sympathy, who are dumb in mixed company. Able people, if they do not know how to make allowance for them, paralyse them. One of those conceited prigs who value nature only as it feeds and exhibits them is equally a pest with the roisterers. There must be large reception as well as giving. How delightful after these disturbers is the radiant, playful wit of—one whom I need not name,—for in every society there is his representative. Good-nature is stronger than tomahawks. His conversation is all pictures: he can reproduce whatever he has seen; he tells the best story in the county, and is of such genial temper that he disposes all others irresistibly to good-humour and discourse. Diderot said of the Abbe Galiani: "He was a treasure in rainy days; and if the cabinet-makers made such things, everybody would have one in the country."

One lesson we learn early,—that, in spite of seeming difference, men are all of one pattern. In fact, the only sin which we never forgive in each other is difference of opinion. We know beforehand that yonder man must think as we do. Has he not two hands,—two feet,—hair and nails? Does he not eat,—bleed,—laugh,—cry? His dissent from me is the veriest affectation. This conclusion is at once the logic of persecution and of love. And the ground of our indignation is our conviction that his dissent is some wilful-

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ness he practises on himself. He checks the flow of his opinion, as the cross cow holds up her milk. Yes, and we look into his eye, and see that he knows it and hides his eye from ours.

But to come a little nearer to my mark, I am to say that there may easily be obstacles in the way of finding the pure article we are in search of ; but when we find it, it is worth the pursuit, for beside its comfort as medicine and cordial, once in the right company, new and vast values do not fail to appear. However courteously we conceal it, it is social rank and spiritual power that are compared ; whether in the parlour, the courts, the caucus, the senate, or the chamber of science,—which are only less or larger theatres for this competition.

He that can define, he that can answer a question so as to admit of no further answer, is the best man. This was the meaning of the story of the Sphinx. In the old time conundrums were sent from king to king by ambassadors. The seven wise masters at Periander's banquet spent their time in answering them. The life of Socrates is a propounding and a solution of these. So, in the hagiology of each nation, the lawgiver was in each case some man of eloquent tongue, whose sympathy brought him face to face with the extremes of society. Jesus, Menu, the first Buddhist, Mahomet, Zertusht, Pythagoras, are examples.

Jesus spent his life in discoursing with humble people on life and duty, in giving wise answers, showing that He saw at a larger angle of vision, and at least silencing those who were not generous enough to accept His thoughts. Luther spent his life so ; and it is not his theologic works,—his *Commentary on the Galatians* and the rest, but his *Table-Talk*, which is still read by men. Dr.

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Johnson was a man of no profound mind,—full of English limitations, English politics, English Church, Oxford philosophy; yet having a large heart, mother-wit, and good sense, which impatiently overleaped his customary bounds, his conversation as reported by Boswell has a lasting charm. Conversation is the vent of character as well as of thought; and Dr. Johnson impresses his company, not only by the point of the remark, but also, when the point fails, because *he* makes it. His obvious religion or superstition, his deep wish that they should think so or so, weighs with them,—so rare is depth of feeling, or a constitutional value for a thought or opinion, among the light-minded men and women who make up society; and though they know that there is in the speaker a degree of shortcoming, of insincerity, and of talking for victory, yet the existence of character, and habitual reverence for principles over talent or learning, is felt by the frivolous.

One of the best records of the great German master, who towered over all his contemporaries in the first thirty years of this century, is his conversations as recorded by Eckermann; and the *Table-Talk* of Coleridge is one of the best remains of his genius.

In the Norse legends, the gods of Valhalla, when they meet Jotuns, the converse on the perilous terms that he who cannot answer the other's questions forfeits his own life. Odin comes to the threshold of the Jotun Waftrhudnir in disguise, calling himself Gangrader; is invited into the hall, and told that he cannot go out thence unless he can answer every question Waftrhudnir shall put. Waftrhudnir asks him the name of the god of the sun, and of the god who brings the night; what river separates the dwellings of the sons of the giants from those of the gods;

what plain lies between the gods and Surtur, their adversary, etc.; all which the disguised Odin answers satisfactorily. Then it is his turn to interrogate, and he is answered well for a time by the Jotun. At last he puts a question which none but himself could answer: "What did Odin whisper in the ear of his son Balder, when Balder mounted the funeral pile?" The startled giant replies: "None of the gods knows what in the old time THOU saidst in the ear of thy son: with death on my mouth have I spoken the fate-words of the generation of the Æsir; with Odin contended I in wise words. Thou must ever the wisest be."

And still the gods and giants are so known, and still they play the same game in all the million mansions of heaven and of earth; at all tables, clubs, and *tête-à-têtes*, the lawyers in the court-house, the senators in the capitol, the doctors in the academy, the wits in the hotel. Best is he who gives an answer that cannot be answered again. *Omnis definitio periculosa est*, and only wit has the secret. The same thing took place when Leibnitz came to visit Newton; when Schiller came to Goethe; when France, in the person of Madam de Stael, visited Goethe and Schiller; when Hegel was the guest of Victor Cousin in Paris; when Linnæus was the guest of Jussieu. It happened many years ago, that an American chemist carried a letter of introduction to Dr. Dalton of Manchester, England, the author of the theory of atomic proportions, and was coolly enough received by the Doctor in the laboratory where he was engaged. Only Dr. Dalton scratched a formula on a scrap of paper and pushed it towards the guest—"Had he seen that?" The visitor scratched on another paper a formula describing some results of his own with sulphuric acid, and pushed it across the table—"Had he seen that?" The attention of the English chemist was instantly arrested,

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and they became rapidly acquainted. To answer a question so as to admit of no reply, is the test of a man,—to touch bottom every time. Hyde, Earl of Rochester, asked Lord-Keeper Guilford, "Do you not think I could understand any business in England in a month?" "Yes, my Lord," replied the other, "but I think you would understand it better in two months." When Edward I. claimed to be acknowledged by the Scotch (1292) as Lord Paramount, the nobles of Scotland replied, "No answer can be made while the throne is vacant." When Henry III (1217) pled duress against his people demanding confirmation and execution of the Charter, the reply was: "If this were admitted, civil wars could never close but by the extirpation of one of the contending parties."

What can you do with one of these sharp respondents? What can you do with an eloquent man? No rules of debate, no contempt of court, no exclusions, no gag-laws can be contrived, that his first syllable will not set aside or overstep and annul. You can shut out the light, it may be; but can you shut out gravitation? You may condemn his book; but can you fight against his thought? That is always too nimble for you, anticipates you, and breaks out victorious in some other quarter. Can you stop the motions of good sense? What can you do with Beaumarchais, who converts the censor whom the court has appointed to stifle his play into an ardent advocate? The court appoints another censor, who shall crush it this time. Beaumarchais persuades him to defend it. The court successively appoints three more severe inquisitors; Beaumarchais converts them all into triumphant vindicators of the play which is to bring in the Revolution. Who can stop the mouth of Luther,—of Newton, of Franklin,—of Mirabeau,—of Talleyrand?

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These masters can make good their own place, and need no patron. Every variety of gift—science, religion, politics, letters, art, prudence, war, or love—has its vent and exchange in conversation. Conversation is the Olympic games whither every superior gift resorts to assert and approve itself,—and, of course, the inspirations of powerful and public men, with the rest. But it is not this class,—whom the splendour of their accomplishment almost inevitably guides into the vortex of ambition, makes them chancellors and commanders of council and of action, and makes them at last fatalists,—not these whom we now consider. We consider those who are interested in thoughts, their own and other men's, and who delight in comparing them, who think it the highest compliment they can pay a man to deal with him as an intellect, to expose to him the grand and cheerful secrets perhaps never opened to their daily companions, to share with him the sphere of freedom and the simplicity of truth.

But the best conversation is rare. Society seems to have agreed to treat fictions as realities, and realities as fictions ; and the simple lover of truth, especially if on very high grounds,—as a religious or intellectual seeker,—finds himself a stranger and alien.

It is possible that the best conversation is between two persons who can talk only to each other. Even Montesquieu confessed that, in conversation, if he perceived he was listened to by a third person, it seemed to him from that moment the whole question vanished from his mind. I have known persons of rare ability who were heavy company to good, social men who knew well enough how to draw out others of retiring habit ; and, moreover, were heavy to intellectual men who ought to have known them.

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And does it never occur that we, perhaps, live with people too superior to be seen—as there are musical notes too high for the scale of most ears? There are men who are great only to one or two companions of more opportunity, or more adapted.

It was to meet these wants that in all civil nations attempts have been made to organise conversation by bringing together cultivated people under the most favourable conditions. 'Tis certain there was liberal and refined conversation in the Greek, in the Roman, and in the Middle Ages. There was a time when in France a revolution occurred in domestic architecture; when the houses of the nobility, which, up to that time, had been constructed on feudal necessities, in a hollow square,—the ground-floor being resigned to offices and stables, and the floors above to rooms of state and to lodging-rooms,—were rebuilt with new purpose. It was the Marchioness of Rambouillet who first got the horses out of and the scholars into the palaces, having constructed her *hôtel* with a view to society, with superb suites of drawing-rooms on the same floor, and broke through the *morgue* of etiquette by inviting to her house men of wit and learning as well as men of rank, and piqued the emulation of Cardinal Richelieu to rival assemblies, and so to the founding of the French Academy. The history of the Hotel Rambouillet and its brilliant circles makes an important date in French civilisation. And a history of clubs from early antiquity, tracing the efforts to secure liberal and refined conversation, through the Greek and Roman to the Middle Age, and thence down through French, English, and German memoirs, tracing the clubs and coteries in each country, would be an important chapter in history. We know well the Mermaid Club in London, of Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, Chapman, Herrick, Selden,

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Beaumont and Fletcher ; its "Rules" are preserved, and many allusions to their suppers are found in Jonson, Herrick, and in Aubrey. Anthony Wood has many details of Harrington's Club. Dr. Bentley's Club held Newton, Wren, Evelyn, and Locke ; and we owe to Boswell our knowledge of the club of Dr. Johnson, Goldsmith, Burke, Gibbon, Reynolds, Garrick, Beauclerk, and Percy. And we have records of the brilliant society that Edinburgh boasted in the first decade of this century. Such societies are possible only in great cities, and are the compensation which these can make to their dwellers for depriving them of the free intercourse with Nature. Every scholar is surrounded by wiser men than he. If they cannot write as well, cannot they meet and exchange results to their mutual benefit and delight ? It was a pathetic experience when a genial and accomplished person said to me, looking from his country home to the capital of New England, "There is a town of two hundred thousand people, and not a chair in it for me." If he were sure to find at No. 2,000 Tremont Street what scholars were abroad after the morning studies were ended, Boston would shine as the New Jerusalem to his eyes.

But the club must be self-protecting, and obstacles arise at the outset. There are people who cannot well be cultivated, whom you must keep down and quiet if you can. There are those who have the instinct of a bat to fly against any lighted candle and put it out—marplots and contradictors. There are those who go only to talk, and those who go only to hear : both are bad. A right rule for a club would be—Admit no man whose presence excludes any one topic. It requires people who are not surprised and shocked, who do and let do, and let be, who sink trifles,

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and know solid values, and who take a great deal for granted.

It is always a practical difficulty with clubs to regulate the laws of election so as to exclude peremptorily every social nuisance. Nobody wishes bad manners. We must have loyalty and character. The poet Marvell was wont to say "that he would not drink wine with any one with whom he could not trust his life." But neither can we afford to be superfine. A man of irreproachable behaviour and excellent sense preferred on his travels taking his chance at a hotel for company, to the charging himself with too many select letters of introduction. He confessed he liked low company. He said the fact was incontestable, that the society of gypsies was more attractive than that of bishops. The girl deserts the parlour for the kitchen: the boy, for the wharf. Tutors and parents cannot interest him like the uproarious conversation he finds in the market or the dock. I knew a scholar, of some experience in camps, who said that he liked, in a bar-room, to tell a few coon stories, and put himself on a good footing with the company; then he could be as silent as he chose. A scholar does not wish to be always pumping his brains: he wants gossips. The black-coats are good company only for black-coats; but when the manufacturers, merchants, and ship-masters meet, see how much they have to say, and how long the conversation lasts! They have come from many zones; they have traversed wide countries; they know each his own arts, and the cunning artisans of his craft; they have seen the best and the worst of men. Their knowledge contradicts the popular opinion and your own on many points. Things which you fancy wrong they know to be right and profitable; things which you reckon superstitious they know to be true. They have found virtue in the strangest homes;

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and in the rich store of their adventures are instances and examples which you have been seeking in vain for years, and which they suddenly and unwittingly offer you.

I remember a social experiment in this direction, wherein it appeared that each of the members fancied he was in need of society, but himself unpresentable. On trial they all found that they could be tolerated by, and could tolerate, each other. Nay, the tendency to extreme self-respect which hesitated to join in a club was running rapidly down to abject admiration of each other, when the club was broken up by new combinations.

The use of the hospitality of the club hardly needs explanation. Men are unbent and social at the table ; and I remember it was explained to me, in a Southern city, that it was impossible to set any public charity on foot unless through a tavern dinner. I do not think our metropolitan charities would plead the same necessity ; but to a club met for conversation a supper is a good basis, as it disarms all parties, and puts pedantry and business to the door. All are in good humour and at leisure, which are the first conditions of discourse ; the ordinary reserves are thrown off, experienced men meet with the freedom of boys, and, sooner or later, impart all that is singular in their experience.

The hospitalities of clubs are easily exaggerated. No doubt the suppers of wits and philosophers acquire much lustre by time and renown. Plutarch, Xenophon, and Plato, who have celebrated each a banquet of their set, have given us next to no data of the viands ; and it is to be believed that an indifferent tavern dinner in such society was more relished by the *convives* than a much better one in worse company. Herrick's verses to Ben Jonson no doubt paint the fact—

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" When we such clusters had
As made us nobly wild, not mad .
And yet, each verse of thine
Outdid the meat, outdid the frolic wine.

Such friends make the feast satisfying : and I notice that it was when things went prosperously, and the company was full of honour, at the banquet of the Cid, that " the guests all were joyful, and agreed in one thing,—that they had not eaten better for three years."

I need only hint the value of the club for bringing masters in their several arts to compare and expand their views, to come to an understanding on these points, and so that their united opinion shall have its just influence on public questions of education and politics. 'Tis agreed that in the sections of the British Association more information is mutually and effectually communicated, in a few hours, than in many months of ordinary correspondence, and the printing and transmission of ponderous reports. We know that *l'homme de lettres* is a little wary, and not fond of giving away his seed-corn ; but there is an infallible way to draw him out, namely, by having as good as he. If you have Tuscaroora and he Canada, he may exchange kernel for kernel. If his discretion is incurable, and he dare not speak of fairy gold, he will yet tell what new books he has found, what old ones recovered, what men write and read abroad. A principal purpose also is the hospitality of the club, as a means of receiving a worthy foreigner with mutual advantage.

Every man brings into society some partial thought and local culture. We need range and alternation of topics, and variety of minds. One likes in a companion a phlegm which it is a triumph to disturb, and, not less, to make in an old acquaintance unexpected discoveries of scope and power

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through the advantage of an inspiring subject. Wisdom is like electricity. There is no permanently wise man, but men capable of wisdom, who, being put into certain company, or other favourable conditions, become wise for a short time, as glasses rubbed acquire electric power for a while. But, while we look complacently at these obvious pleasures and values of good companions, I do not forget that Nature is always very much in earnest, and that her great gifts have something serious and stern. When we look for the highest benefits of conversation, the Spartan rule of one to one is usually enforced. Discourse, when it rises highest and searches deepest, when it lifts us into that mood out of which thoughts come that remain as stars in our firmament, is between two.

Ralph Waldo Emerson.

VIII PEACE ¹

Edinburgh, October 13, 1853.

IT is a great advantage in this country, I think, that we have no want of ample criticism. Whatever we may have said yesterday and to-day will form the subject of criticism, not of the most friendly character, in very many newspapers throughout the United Kingdom. I recollect when we met in Manchester, that papers disposed to be friendly, warned us as to the course we were taking, and that the time was ill-chosen for a peace meeting. It was said that the people were excited against France, and were alarmed at their almost total defencelessness, and that there was no use in endeavouring to place before them the facts which the peace men offered to their audience. The result showed that they were mistaken, for you will recollect that, while up to that meeting there was a constantly swelling tide of alarm and hostility with regard to France, from the day the Conference was held there was a gradual receding of the tide, that the alarm and apprehension rapidly diminished, and that by the time the House of Commons met in February we were willing to receive from Lord John Russell and other statesmen the most positive assurances that France was not increasing her force, and that there was not the slightest reason to believe that the Government of France entertained anything but the most friendly feeling towards the Government of this country.

¹ This speech was spoken at the Conference of the Peace Society, held at Edinburgh in the autumn of 1853. The relation of this meeting to the Russian War, then impending, made the gathering more than ordinarily important.

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The right time to oppose the errors and prejudices of the people never comes to the eyes of those writers in the public press who pander to these prejudices. They say, We must not do so and so, we shall embarrass the Government. But rumour says the Government has been pretty well embarrassed already. They say that we shall complicate the question if we interfere ; but it cannot well be more complicated than it is ; for hardly anybody but the peace men can tell how to unravel it. Next, they tell us that we shall impair the harmony of opinion which there appears to be in the country, from the fact of there having been three or four insignificant meetings, by which the Government is to be impelled to more active and energetic measures. Now, what is it that we really want here ? We wish to protest against the maintenance of great armaments in time of peace ; we wish to protest against the spirit which is not only willing for war, but eager for war ; and we wish to protest, with all the emphasis of which we are capable, against the mischievous policy pursued so long by this country, of interfering with the internal affairs of other countries, and thereby leading to disputes, and often to disastrous wars.

I mentioned last night what it was we were annually spending on our armaments. Admiral Napier says that the Hon. Member for the West Riding, who can do everything, had persuaded a feeble Government to reduce the armaments of this country to "nothing." What is "nothing" in the Admiral's estimation ? Fifteen millions a year ! Was all that money thrown away ? We have it in the estimates, we pay it out of the taxes—it is appropriated by Parliament, it sustains your dockyards, pays the wages of your men, and maintains your ships. Fifteen millions sterling paid in the very year when the Admiral

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says that my hon. Friend reduced the armaments of the country to nothing! But take the sums which we spent for the past year in warlike preparations—seventeen millions, and the interest on debt caused by war—twenty-eight millions sterling; and it amounts to 45,000,000*l*. What are our whole exports? Even this year, far the largest year of exports we have ever known, they may amount to 80,000,000*l*. Well, then, plant some one at the mouth of every port and harbour in the United Kingdom, and let him take every alternate ship that leaves your rivers and your harbours with all its valuable cargo on board, and let him carry it off as tribute, and it will not amount to the cost that you pay every year for a war, that fifty years ago was justified as much as it is attempted to justify this impending war, and for the preparations which you now make after a peace which has lasted for thirty-eight years.

Every twenty years—in a nation's life nothing, in a person's life something—every twenty years a thousand millions sterling out of the industry of the hard-working people of this United Kingdom, are extorted, appropriated, and expended to pay for that unnecessary and unjust war, and for the absurd and ruinous expenditure which you now incur. A thousand millions every twenty years! Apply a thousand millions, not every twenty years, but for one period of twenty years, to objects of good in this country, and it would be rendered more like a paradise than anything that history records of man's condition, and would make so great a change in these islands, that a man having seen them as they are now, and seeing them as they might then be, would not recognize them as the same country, nor our population as the same people. But what do we expend all this for? Bear in mind that Admirals, and

a good
point

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Generals, and statesmen defended that great war, and that your newspapers, with scarcely an exception, were in favour of it, and denounced and ostracized hundreds of good men who dared, as we dare now, to denounce the spirit which would again lead this country into war. We went to war that France should not choose its own Government ; the grand conclusion was that no Bonaparte should sit on the throne of France ; yet France has all along been changing its Government from that time to this, and now we find ourselves with a Bonaparte on the throne of France, and, for anything I know to the contrary, likely to remain there a good while. So far, therefore, for the calculations of our forefathers, and for the results of that enormous expenditure which they have saddled upon us.

We object to these great armaments as provoking a war spirit. I should like to ask, what was the object of the Chobham exhibition ? There were special trains at the disposal of Members of Parliament, to go down to Chobham the one day, and to Spithead the other. What was the use of our pointing to the President of the French Republic two years ago, who is the Emperor now, and saying that he was spending his time at playing at soldiers in his great camp at Satory, and in making great circuses for the amusement of his soldiers ? We, too, are getting into the way of playing at soldiers, and camps, and fleets, and the object of this is to raise up in the spirit of the people a feeling antagonistic to peace, and to render the people—the deluded, hard-working, toiling people—satisfied with the extortion of 17,000,000*l.* annually, when upon the very principles of the men who take it, it might be demonstrated that one-half of the money would be amply sufficient for the purpose to which it is devoted. What observation has been more common during the discussion

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upon Turkey than this—"Why are we to keep up these great fleets if we are not to use them? Why have we our Mediterranean fleet lying at Besika Bay, when it might be earning glory, and adding to the warlike renown of the country?" This is just what comes from the maintenance of great fleets and armies. There grows up an *esprit de corps*—there grows a passion for these things, a powerful opinion in their favour, that smothers the immorality of the whole thing, and leads the people to tolerate, under those excited feelings, that which, under feelings of greater temperance and moderation, they would know was hostile to their country, as it is opposed to everything which we recognize as the spirit of the Christian religion.

Then, we are against intervention. But I should like to ask this meeting what sort of intervention we are to have? There are three kinds—one for despotism, one for liberty; and you may have an intervention like that now proposed, from a vague sense of danger which cannot be accurately described. What have our interventions been up to this time? I will come to that of which Admiral Napier spoke by and by. It is not long since we intervened in the case of Spain. The foreign enlistment laws were suspended; and English soldiers went to join the Spanish legion, and the Government of Spain was fixed in the present Queen of that country; and yet Spain has the most exclusive tariff against this country in the world, and a dead Englishman is there reckoned little better than a dead dog. Then take the case of Portugal. We interfered, and Admiral Napier was one of those employed in that interference, to place the Queen of Portugal on the throne, and yet she has violated every clause of the charter which she had sworn to the people; and in 1849, under the Government of Lord John Russell, and with Lord

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Palmerston in the Foreign Office, our fleet entered the Tagus and destroyed the Liberal party, by allowing the Queen to escape from their hands, when they would have driven her to give additional guarantees for liberty; and from that time to this she has still continued to violate every clause of the charter of the country. Now, let us come to Syria; what has Admiral Napier said about the Syrian war? He told us that the English fleet was scattered all about the Mediterranean, and that if the French fleet had come to Cherbourg, and had taken on board 50,000 men and landed them on our coasts, all sorts of things would have befallen us. But how happened it that Admiral Napier and his friends got up the quarrel with the French? Because we interfered in the Syrian question when we had no business to interfere whatever. The Egyptian Pasha, the vassal of the Sultan, became more powerful than the Sultan, and threatened to depose him and place himself as monarch upon the throne of Constantinople; and but for England, he would assuredly have done it. Why did we interfere? What advantage was it to have a feeble monarch in Constantinople, when you might have had an energetic and powerful one in Mehemet Ali? We interfered, however, and quarrelled with France, although she neither declared war nor landed men upon our coast. France is not a country of savages and banditti. The Admiral's whole theory goes upon this, that there is a total want of public morality in France, and that something which no nation in Europe would dare to do, or think of doing, which even Russia would scorn to do, would be done without any warning by the polished, civilized, and intelligent nation across the Channel.

But if they are the friends of freedom who think we ought to go to war with Russia because Russia is a des-

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potic country, what do you say to the interference with the Roman Republic three or four years ago? What do you say to Lord John Russell's Government,—Lord Palmerston with his own hand writing the despatch, declaring that the Government of her Majesty, the Queen of England, entirely concurred with the Government of the French Republic in believing that it was desirable and necessary to re-establish the Pope upon his throne? The French army, with the full concurrence of the English Government, crossed over to Italy, invaded Rome, destroyed the Republic, banished its leading men, and restored the Pope; and on that throne he sits still, maintained only by the army of France.

My hon. Friend has referred to the time when Russia crossed through the very Principalities we hear so much about, and entered Hungary. I myself heard Lord Palmerston in the House of Commons go out of his way needlessly, but intentionally, to express a sort of approbation of the intervention of Russia in the case of Hungary. I heard him say, in a most unnecessary parenthesis, that it was not contrary to international law, or to the law of Europe, for Russia to send an army into Hungary to assist Austria in putting down the Hungarian insurrection. I should like to know whether Hungary had not constitutional rights as sacred as ever any country had—as sacred, surely, as the Sovereign of Turkey can have upon his throne. If it were not contrary to international law and to the law of Europe for a Russian army to invade Hungary, to suppress there a struggle which called for, and obtained too, the sympathy of every man in favour of freedom in every part of the world, I say, how can it be contrary to international law and the law of Europe for

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Russia to threaten the Sultan of Turkey, and to endeavour to annex Turkey to the Russian Empire ?

I want our policy to be consistent. Do not let us interfere now, or concur in or encourage the interference of anybody else, and then get up a hypocritical pretence on some other occasion that we are against interference. If you want war, let it be for something that has at least the features of grandeur and of nobility about it, but not for the miserable, decrepit, moribund Government which is now enthroned, but which cannot long last, in the city of Constantinople. But Admiral Napier is alarmed lest, if Russia was possessed of Turkey, she would, somehow or other, embrace all Europe—that we all should be in the embrace of the Bear—and we know very well what that is. I believe that is all a vague and imaginary danger ; and I am not for going to war for imaginary dangers. War is much too serious a matter. I recollect when France endeavoured to lay hold on Algeria, it was said that the Mediterranean was about to become a French lake. I do not believe that France is a bit more powerful in possessing it. It requires 100,000 French soldiers to maintain Algeria ; and if a balance-sheet could be shown of what Algeria has cost France, and what France has gained from it, I believe you would have no difficulty whatever in discovering the reason why the French finances show a deficit, and why there is a rumour that another French loan is about to be created.

But they tell us that if Russia gets to Constantinople, Englishmen will not be able to get to India by the overland journey. Mehemet Ali, even when Admiral Napier was battering down his towns, did not interfere with the carriage of our mails through his territory. We bring our

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overland mails at present partly through Austria, and partly through France, and the mails from Canada pass through the United States; and though I do not think there is the remotest possibility or probability of anything of the kind happening, yet I do not think that, in the event of war with these countries, we should have our mails stopped or our persons arrested in passing through these countries. At any rate it would be a much more definite danger that would drive me to incur the ruin, guilt, and suffering of war.

But they tell us, further, that the Emperor of Russia would get India. That is a still more remote contingency. If I were asked as to the probabilities of it, I should say that, judging from our past and present policy in Asia, we are more likely to invade Russia from India than Russia is to invade us in India. The policy we pursue in Asia is much more aggressive, aggrandizing, and warlike than any that Russia has pursued or threatened during our time. But it is just possible that Russia may be more powerful by acquiring Turkey. I give the Admiral the benefit of that admission. But I should like to ask whether, even if that be true, it is a sufficient reason for our going to war, and entering on what perhaps may be a long, ruinous, and sanguinary struggle, with a powerful empire like Russia?

What is war? I believe that half the people that talk about war have not the slightest idea of what it is. In a short sentence it may be summed up to be the combination and concentration of all the horrors, atrocities, crimes, and sufferings of which human nature on this globe is capable. But what is even a rumour of war? Is there anybody here who has anything in the funds, or who is the owner

of any railway stock, or anybody who has a large stock of raw material or manufactured goods? The funds have recently gone down 10 per cent. I do not say that the fall is all on account of this danger of war, but a great proportion of it undoubtedly is. A fall of 10 per cent. in the funds is nearly 80,000,000*l.* sterling of value, and railway stock having gone down 20 per cent. makes a difference of 60,000,000*l.* in the value of the railway property of this country. Add the two—140,000,000*l.*—and take the diminished prosperity and value of manufactures of all kinds during the last few months, and you will understate the actual loss to the country now if you put it down at 200,000,000*l.* sterling. But that is merely a rumour of war. That war is a long way off—the small cloud, no bigger than a man's hand—what will it be if it comes nearer and becomes a fact? And surely sane men ought to consider whether the case is a good one, the ground fair, the necessity clear, before they drag a nation of nearly 30,000,000 of people into a long and bloody struggle, for a decrepit and tottering empire, which all the nations in Europe cannot long sustain. And, mind, war now would take a different aspect from what it did formerly. It is not only that you send out men who submit to be slaughtered, and that you pay a large amount of taxes—the amount of taxes would be but a feeble indication of what you would suffer. Our trade is now much more extensive than it was; our commerce is more expanded, our undertakings are more vast, and war will find you all out at home by withering up the resources of the prosperity enjoyed by the middle and working classes of the country. You would find that war in 1853 would be infinitely more perilous and destructive to our country than it has ever yet been at any former period of our history. There is another

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question which comes home to my mind with a gravity and seriousness which I can scarcely hope to communicate to you. You who lived during the period from 1815 to 1822 may remember that this country was probably never in a more uneasy position. The sufferings of the working classes were beyond description, and the difficulties, and struggles, and bankruptcies of the middle classes were such as few persons have a just idea of. There was scarcely a year in which there was not an incipient insurrection in some parts of the country, arising from the sufferings which the working classes endured. You know very well that the Government of the day employed spies to create plots, and to get ignorant men to combine to take unlawful oaths; and you know that in the town of Stirling, two men who, but for this diabolical agency, might have lived good and honest citizens, paid the penalty of their lives for their connection with unlawful combinations of this kind.

Well, if you go into war now you will have more banners to decorate your cathedrals and churches. Englishmen will fight now as well as they ever did, and there is ample power to back them, if the country can be but sufficiently excited and deluded. You may raise up great Generals. You may have another Wellington, and another Nelson too; for this country can grow men capable for every enterprise. Then there may be titles, and pensions, and marble monuments to eternize the men who have thus become great; but what becomes of you and your country, and your children? For there is more than this in store. That seven years to which I have referred was a period dangerous to the existence of Government in this country, for the whole substratum, the whole foundations of society were discontented, suffering intolerable

evils, and hostile in the bitterest degree to the institutions and the Government of the country.

Precisely the same things will come again. Rely on it, that injustice of any kind, be it bad laws, or be it a bloody, unjust, and unnecessary war, of necessity creates perils to every institution in the country. If the Corn-law had continued, if it had been impossible, by peaceful agitation, to abolish it, the monarchy itself would not have survived the ruin and disaster that it must have wrought. And if you go into a war now, with a doubled population, with a vast commerce, with extended credit, and a wider diffusion of partial education among the people, let there ever come a time like the period between 1815 and 1822, when the whole basis of society is upheaving with a sense of intolerable suffering, I ask you, how many years' purchase would you give even for the venerable and mild monarchy under which you have the happiness to live? I confess when I think of the tremendous perils into which unthinking men—men who do not intend to fight themselves—are willing to drag or to hurry this country, I am amazed how they can trifle with interests so vast, and consequences so much beyond their calculation.

But, speaking here in Edinburgh to such an audience I think I may put before you higher considerations even than those of property and the institutions of your country. I may remind you of duties more solemn, and of obligations more imperative. You profess to be a Christian nation. You make it your boast even—though boasting is somewhat out of place in such questions—you make it your boast that you are a Protestant people, and that you draw your rule of doctrine and practice, as from a well pure and undefiled, from the living oracles of God, and

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from the direct revelation of the Omnipotent. You have even conceived the magnificent project of illuminating the whole earth, even to its remotest and darkest recesses, by the dissemination of the volume of the New Testament, in whose every page are written for ever the words of peace. Within the limits of this island alone, on every Sabbath, 20,000, yes, far more than 20,000 temples are thrown open, in which devout men and women assemble that they may worship Him who is the "Prince of Peace."

Is this a reality? or is your Christianity a romance? is your profession a dream? No, I am sure that your Christianity is not a romance, and I am equally sure that your profession is not a dream. It is because I believe this that I appeal to you with confidence, and that I have hope and faith in the future. I believe that we shall see, and at no very distant time, sound economic principles spreading much more widely amongst the people; a sense of justice growing up in a soil which hitherto has been deemed unfruitful; and, which will be better than all—the churches of the United Kingdom—the churches of Britain awaking, as it were, from their slumbers, and girding up their loins to more glorious work, when they shall not only accept and believe in the prophecy, but labour earnestly for its fulfilment, that there shall come a time—a blessed time—a time which shall last for ever—when "nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

John Bright

IX

THE VOLUNTEER STUDENT

(Inaugural Address on the opening of the Winter Session of the Birmingham and Midland Institute, delivered on September 27th, 1869).

WE often hear of our common country that it is an over-populated one, that it is an over-pauperized one, that it is an over-colonizing one, and that it is an over-taxed one. Now, I entertain, especially of late times, the heretical belief that it is an over-talked one, and that there is a deal of public speech-making going about in various directions which might be advantageously dispensed with. If I were free to act upon this conviction, as president for the time being of the great institution so numerously represented here, I should immediately and at once subside into a golden silence, which would be of a highly edifying, because of a very exemplary character. But I happen to be the institution's willing servant, not its imperious master, and it exacts tribute of mere silver or copper speech—not to say brazen—from whomsoever it exalts to my high office. Some African tribes—not to draw the comparison disrespectfully—some savage African tribes, when they make a king, require him perhaps to achieve an exhausting foot-race under the stimulus of considerable popular prodding and goading, or perhaps to be severely and experimentally knocked about the head by his Privy Council, or perhaps to be dipped in a river full of crocodiles, or perhaps to drink immense quantities of something nasty out of a calabash—at all events, to undergo some purifying ordeal in presence of his admiring subjects.

I must confess that I became rather alarmed when I was duly warned by your constituted authorities that what-

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ever I might happen to say here to-night would be termed an inaugural address on the entrance upon a new term of study by the members of your various classes ; for, besides that the phrase is something high-sounding for my taste, I avow that I do look forward to that blessed time when every man shall inaugurate his own work for himself, and do it. I believe that we shall then have inaugurated a new era indeed, and one in which the Lord's Prayer will become a fulfilled prophecy upon this earth. Remembering, however, that you may call anything by any name without in the least changing its nature—bethinking myself that you may, if you be so minded, call a butterfly a buffalo, without advancing a hair's breadth towards making it one—I became composed in my mind, and resolved to stick to the very homely intention I had previously formed. This was merely to tell you, the members, students, and friends of the Birmingham and Midland Institute—firstly, what you cannot possibly want to know (this is a very popular oratorical theme) ; secondly, what your institution has done ; and, thirdly, what, in the poor opinion of its President for the time being, remains for it to do and not to do.

Now, first, as to what you cannot possibly want to know. You cannot need from me any oratorical declamation concerning the abstract advantages of knowledge or the beauties of self-improvement. If you had any such requirement you would not be here. I conceive that you are here because you have become thoroughly penetrated with such principles, either in your own persons or in the persons of some striving fellow-creatures, on whom you have looked with interest and sympathy. I conceive that you are here because you feel the welfare of the great chiefly adult educational establishment, whose doors stand

really open to all sorts and conditions of people, to be inseparable from the best welfare of your great town and its neighbourhood. Nay, if I take a much wider range than that, and say that we all—every one of us here—perfectly well know that the benefits of such an establishment must extend far beyond the limits of this midland county—its fires and smoke,—and must comprehend, in some sort, the whole community, I do not strain the truth. It was suggested by Mr. Babbage, in his ninth “Bridgewater Treatise” that a mere spoken word—a single articulated syllable thrown into the air—may go on reverberating through illimitable space for ever and for ever, seeing that there is no rim against which it can strike—no boundary at which it can possibly arrive. Similarly it may be said—not as an ingenious speculation, but as a steadfast and absolute fact—that human calculation cannot limit the influence of one atom of wholesome knowledge patiently acquired, modestly possessed, and faithfully used.

As the astronomers tell us that it is probable that there are in the universe innumerable solar systems besides ours, to each of which myriads of utterly unknown and unseen stars belong, so it is certain that every man, however obscure, however far removed from the general recognition, is one of a group of men impressible for good, and impressible for evil, and that it is in the eternal nature of things that he cannot really improve himself without in some degree improving other men. And observe, this is especially the case when he has improved himself in the teeth of adverse circumstances, as in a maturity succeeding to a neglected or an ill-taught youth, in the few daily hours remaining to him after ten or twelve hours’ labour, in the few pauses and intervals of a life of toil; for then his fellows and companions have assurance that he can have

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known no favouring conditions, and that they can do what he has done, in wresting some enlightenment and self-respect from what Lord Lytton finely calls—

“Those twin gaolers of the daring heart,
Low birth and iron fortune.”

As you have proved these truths in your own experience or in your own observation, and as it may be safely assumed that there can be very few persons in Birmingham, of all places under heaven, who would contest the position that the more cultivated the employed the better for the employer, and the more cultivated the employer the better for the employed ; therefore, my references to what you do not want to know shall here cease and determine.

Next, with reference to what your institution has done, I desire to lay emphatic stress. Your institution, sixteen years old, and in which masters and workmen study together, has outgrown the ample edifice in which it receives its 2,500 or 2,600 members and students. It is a most cheering sign of its vigorous vitality that of its industrial students almost half are artisans in the receipt of weekly wages. I think I am correct in saying that 400 others are clerks, apprentices, tradesmen, or tradesmen's sons. I note with particular pleasure the adherence of a goodly number of the gentler sex, without whom no institution whatever can truly claim to be either a civilising or a civilised one. The increased attendance at your educational classes is always greatest on the part of the artisans—the class within my experience the least reached in any similar institutions elsewhere, and whose name is the oftenest and the most constantly taken in vain. But it is specially reached here, not improbably because it is, as it should be, specially addressed in the foundation of the industrial department,

in the allotment of the direction of the society's affairs, and in the establishment of what are called its penny classes—a bold, and, I am happy to say, a triumphantly successful experiment, which enables the artisan to obtain sound evening instruction in subjects directly bearing upon his daily usefulness or on his daily happiness, as arithmetic (elementary and advanced), chemistry, physical geography, and singing, on payment of the astoundingly low fee of a single penny every time he attends the class. I beg emphatically to say that I look upon this as one of the most remarkable schemes ever devised for the educational behoof of the artisan, and if your institution had done nothing else in all its life, I would take my stand by it on its having done this.

Apart, however, from its industrial department, it has its general department, offering all the advantages of a first-class literary institution. It has its reading-rooms, its library, its chemical laboratory, its museum, its art department, its lecture hall, and its long list of lectures on subjects of various and comprehensive interest, delivered by lecturers of the highest qualifications. Very well. But it may be asked, what are the practical results of all these appliances? Now, let us suppose a few. Suppose that your institution should have educated those who are now its teachers. That would be a very remarkable fact. Supposing, besides, it should, so to speak, have educated education all around it, by sending forth numerous and efficient teachers into many and diverse schools. Suppose the young student, reared exclusively in its laboratory, should be presently snapped up for the laboratory of the great and famous hospitals. Suppose that in nine years its industrial students should have carried off a round dozen of the much competed for prizes awarded by the Society

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of Arts and the Government department, besides two local prizes originating in the generosity of a Birmingham man. Suppose that the Town Council, having it in trust to find an artisan well fit to receive the Whitworth prizes, should find him here. Suppose that one of the industrial students should turn his chemical studies to the practical account of extracting gold from waste colour water, and of taking it into custody, in the very act of running away with hundreds of pounds down the town drains. Suppose another should perceive in his books, in his studious evenings, what was amiss with his master's until then inscrutably defective furnace, and should go straight—to the great annual saving of that master—and put it right. Supposing another should puzzle out the means, until then quite unknown in England, of making a certain description of coloured glass. Supposing another should qualify himself to vanquish one by one, as they daily arise, all the little difficulties incidental to his calling as an electro-plater, and should be applied to by his companions in the shop in all emergencies under the name of the "Encyclopædia". Suppose a long procession of such cases, and then consider that these are not suppositions at all, but are plain, unvarnished facts, culminating in the one special and significant fact that, with a single solitary exception, every one of the institution's industrial students who have taken its prizes within ten years, have since climbed to higher situations in their way of life.

As to the extent to which the institution encourages the artisan to think, and so, for instance, to rise superior to the little shackling prejudices and observances perchance existing in his trade when they will not bear the test of inquiry, that is only to be equalled by the extent to which it encourages him to feel. There is a certain tone

CHARLES DICKENS

of modest manliness pervading all the little facts which I have looked through which I found remarkably impressive. The decided objection on the part of industrial students to attend classes in their working clothes breathes this tone, as being a graceful and at the same time perfectly independent recognition of the place and of one another. And this tone is admirably illustrated in a different way, in the case of a poor bricklayer, who, being in temporary reverses through the illness of his family, and having consequently been obliged to part with his best clothes, and being therefore missed from his classes, in which he had been noticed as a very hard worker, was persuaded to attend them in his working clothes. He replied, "No. it was not possible. It must not be thought of. It must not come into question for a moment. It would be supposed, or it might be thought, that he did it to attract attention." And the same man being offered by one of the officers a loan of money to enable him to rehabilitate his appearance, positively declined it, on the ground that he came to the institution to learn and to know better how to help himself, not otherwise to ask help, or to receive help from any man. Now, I am justified in calling this the tone of the institution, because it is no isolated instance, but is a fair and honourable sample of the spirit of the place, and as such I put it at the conclusion—though last certainly not least—of my references to what your institution has indubitably done.

Well, I come at length to what, in the humble opinion of the evanescent officer before you, remains for the institution to do, and not to do. As Mr. Carlyle has it towards the closing pages of his grand history of the French Revolution, "This we are now with due brevity to glance at ; and then courage, oh listener, I see land !"

THE VOLUNTEER STUDENT

I earnestly hope—and I firmly believe—that your institution will do henceforth as it has done hitherto; it can hardly do better. I hope and believe that it will know among its members no distinction of persons, creed, or party, but that it will conserve its place of assemblage as a high, pure ground, on which all such considerations shall merge into the one universal, heaven-sent aspiration of the human soul to be wiser and better. I hope and believe that it will always be expansive and elastic; for ever seeking to devise new means of enlarging the circle of its members, of attracting to itself the confidence of still greater and greater numbers, and never evincing any more disposition to stand still than time does, or life does, or the seasons do. And above all things, I hope, and I feel confident from its antecedents, that it will never allow any consideration on the face of the earth to induce it to patronise or to be patronised, for I verily believe that the bestowal and receipt of patronage in such wise has been a curse in England, and that it has done more to prevent really good objects, and to lower really high character, than the utmost efforts of the narrowest antagonism could have effected in twice the time.

I have no fear that the walls of the Birmingham and Midland Institute will ever tremble responsive to the croakings of the timid opponents of intellectual progress. It is commonly assumed—much too commonly—that this age is a material age, and that a material age is an irreligious age. I have been pained lately to see this assumption repeated in certain influential quarters for which I have a high respect, and desire to have a higher. I am afraid that by dint of constantly being reiterated, and reiterated without protest, this assumption—which I take leave altogether to deny—may be accepted by the

more unthinking part of the public as unquestionably true. I confess, standing here in the responsible situation, that I do not understand this much-used and much-abused phrase—the “material age.” I cannot comprehend—if anybody can I very much doubt—its logical signification. For instance, has electricity become more material in the mind of any sane or moderately insane man, woman, or child, because of the discovery that in the good providence of God it could be made available for the service and use of man to an immeasurably greater extent than for his destruction? Do I make a more material journey to the bed-side of my dying parent or my dying child, when I travel there at the rate of sixty miles an hour, than when I travel thither at the rate of six? Rather, in the swiftest case, does not my agonised heart become overfraught with gratitude to that Supreme Beneficence from whom alone could have proceeded the wonderful means of shortening my suspense? What is the materiality of the cable or the wire compared with the materiality of the spark? What is the materiality of certain chemical substances that we can weigh or measure, imprison or release, compared with the materiality of their appointed affinities and repulsions presented to them from the instant of their creation to the day of judgment? When did this so-called material age begin? With the use of clothing; with the discovery of the compass; with the invention of the art of printing? Surely, it has been a long time about; and which is the more material object, the farthing tallow candle that will not give me light, or that flame of gas which will?

No, do not let us be discouraged or deceived by any fine, vapid, empty words. The true material age is the stupid Chinese age, in which no new or grand revelations

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of nature are granted, because they are ignorantly and insolently repelled, instead of being diligently and humbly sought. The difference between the ancient fiction of the mad braggart defying the lightning and the modern historical picture of Franklin drawing it towards his kite, in order that he might the more profoundly study that which was set before him to be studied (or it would not have been there), happily expresses to my mind the distinction between the much-maligned material sages—material in one sense, I suppose, but in another very immaterial sages—of the Celestial Empire school. Consider whether it is likely or unlikely, natural or unnatural, reasonable or unreasonable, that I, a being capable of thought, and finding myself surrounded by such discovered wonders on every hand, should sometimes ask myself the question—should put to myself the solemn consideration—can these things be among those things which might have been disclosed by divine lips nigh upon two thousand years ago, but that the people of that time could not bear them? And whether this be so or no, if I am so surrounded on every hand, is not my moral responsibility tremendously increased thereby, and with it my intelligence and submission as a child of Adam and of the dust, before that Shining Source which equally of all that is granted and all that is withheld, holds in His mighty hands the unapproachable mysteries of life and death?

To the students of your industrial classes generally I have had it in my mind, first, to commend the short motto, in two words, "Courage—Persevere," simply because it is good and right of itself, and because, being so, it does assuredly bring with it its own resources and its own rewards. I would further commend to them a very wise and witty piece of advice on the conduct of the understand-

ing which was given more than half a century ago by the Rev. Sydney Smith—wisest and wittiest of the friends I have lost. He says—and he is speaking, you will please understand, as I speak, to a school of volunteer students—he says : “There is a piece of foppery which is to be cautiously guarded against, the foppery of universality, of knowing all sciences and excelling in all arts—chemistry, mathematics, algebra, dancing, history, reasoning, riding, fencing, Low Dutch, High Dutch, and natural philosophy. In short, the modern precept of education very often is, ‘Take the Admirable Crichton for your model, I would have you ignorant of nothing.’ “Now,” says he, “my advice, on the contrary, is to have the courage to be ignorant of a great number of things, in order that you may avoid the calamity of being ignorant of everything.”

To this I would superadd a little truth, which holds equally good of my own life and the life of every eminent man I have ever known. The one serviceable, safe, certain, remunerative, attainable quality in every study and in every pursuit is the quality of attention. Genius, vivacity, quickness of penetration, brilliancy in association of ideas—such mental qualities, like the qualities of the apparition of the externally armed head in *Macbeth*, will not be commanded ; but attention, after due term of submissive service, always will. Like certain plants which the poorest peasant may grow in the poorest soil, it can be cultivated by any one, and it is certain in its own good season to bring forth flowers and fruit. I can most truthfully assure you by-the-by, that this eulogium on attention is so far quite distinterested on my part as that it has not the least reference whatever to the attention with which you have honoured me.

Well, I have done. I cannot but reflect how often

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you have probably heard within these walls one of the foremost men, and certainly one of very best speakers, if not the very best, in England. I could not say to myself when I began just now, in Shakespeare's line—

“I will be BRIGHT and shining gold”.

but I could say to myself, and I did say to myself, “I will be as natural and easy as I possibly can,” because my heart has all been in my subject, and I bear an old love towards Birmingham and Birmingham men. I have said that I bear an old love towards Birmingham and Birmingham men ; let me amend a small omission, and add “and Birmingham women.” This ring I wear on my finger now is an old Birmingham gift, and if by rubbing it I could raise the spirit that was obedient to Aladdin's ring, I heartily assure you that my first instruction to that genius on the spot should be to place himself at Birmingham's disposal in the best of causes.

Charles Dickens.

X

WAR *

YOUNG SOLDIERS, I do not doubt but that many of you came unwillingly to-night, and many in merely contemptuous curiosity, to hear what a writer on painting could possibly say, or would venture to say respecting your great art of war. You may well think within yourselves, that a painter might, perhaps without immodesty, lecture younger painters upon painting, but not young lawyers upon law, nor young physicians upon medicine—least of all, it may seem to you, young warriors upon war. And, indeed, when I was asked to address you, I declined at first, and declined long ; for I felt that you would not be interested in my special business, and would certainly think there was small need for me to come to teach you yours.

But being asked, not once nor twice, I have not ventured persistently to refuse; and I will try, in very few words, to lay before you some reason why you should accept my excuse, and hear me patiently. You may imagine that your work is wholly foreign to, and separate from mine. So far from that, all the pure and noble arts of peace are founded on war ; no great art ever yet rose on earth, but among a nation of soldiers. There is no art among a shepherd people, if it remains at peace. There is no art among an agriculture people, if it remains at peace. Commerce is barely consistent with fine art; but cannot produce it. Manufacture not only is unable to produce it, but invariably destroys whatever seeds of it

*Delivered at the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich.

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exist. There is no great art possible to a nation but that which is based on battle.

Now, though I hope you love fighting for its own sake, you must, I imagine, be surprised at my assertion that there is any such good fruit of fighting. You supposed, probably, that your office was to defend the works of peace, but certainly not to found them: nay, the common course of war, you may have thought, was only to destroy them. And truly, I, who tell you this of the use of war, should have been the last of men to tell you so, had I trusted my own experience only. Hear why: I have given a considerable part of my life to the investigation of Venetian painting; and the result of that inquiry was my fixing upon one man as the greatest of all Venetians, and therefore, as I believed, of all painters whatsoever. I formed this faith (whether right or wrong matters at present nothing), in the supremacy of the painter Tintoret, under a roof covered with his pictures; and of those pictures, three of the noblest were then in the form of shreds of ragged canvas, mixed up with the laths of the roof, rent through by three Austrian shells. Now, it is not every lecturer who *could* tell you that he had seen three of his favourite pictures torn to rags by bomb-shells. And after such a sight, it is not every lecturer who *would* tell you that, nevertheless, "war was the foundation of all great art." — *justify*

Yet the conclusion is inevitable, from any careful comparison of the states of great historic races at different periods. Merely to show you what I mean, I will sketch for you, very briefly, the broad steps of the advance of the best art of the world. The first dawn of it is in Egypt; and the power of it is founded on the perpetual contemplation of death, and of future judgment, by the mind of a Egyptians — believed in 107 bc after death, and future judgment — So paintings.

ration of which the ruling caste were priests, and the second, soldiers. The greatest works produced by them are sculptures of their kings going out to battle, or receiving the homage of conquered armies. And you must remember also, as one of the great keys to the splendour of the Egyptian nation, that the priests were not occupied in theology only. Their theology was the basis of practical government and law; so that they were not so much priests as religious judges; the office of Samuel, among the Jews, being as nearly as possible correspondent to theirs.

All the rudiments of art then, and much more than the rudiments of all science, are laid first by this great warrior-nation, which held in contempt all mechanical trades, and in absolute hatred the peaceful life of shepherds. From Egypt art passes directly into Greece, where all poetry, and all painting, are nothing else than the description, praise, or dramatic representation of war, or of the exercises which prepare for it, in their connection with offices of religion. All Greek institutions had first respect to war; and their conception of it, as one necessary office of all human and divine life is expressed simply by the images of their guiding gods. Apollo is the god of all wisdom of the intellect; he bears the arrow and the bow, before he bears the lyre. Again, Athena is the goddess of all wisdom in conduct. It is by the helmet and the shield, oftener than by the shuttle, that she is distinguished from other deities. *conducting*

There were, however, two great differences in principle between the Greek and the Egyptian theories of policy. In Greece there was no soldier caste; every citizen was necessarily a soldier. And, again, while the Greeks rightly

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despised mechanical arts as much as the Egyptians, they did not make the fatal mistake of despising agricultural and pastoral life; but perfectly honoured both. These two conditions of truer thought raise them quite into the highest rank of wise manhood that has yet been reached; for all our great arts, and nearly all our great thoughts, have been borrowed or derived from them. Take away from us what they have given; and I hardly can imagine how low the modern European would stand.

Now, you are to remember, in passing to the next phase of history, that though you *must* have war to produce art—you must also have much more than war; namely, an art-instinct or genius in the people; and that, though all the talent for painting in the world won't make painters of you, unless you have a gift for fighting as well, you may have the gift for fighting, and none for painting. Now, in the next great dynasty of soldiers, the art-instinct is wholly wanting. I have not yet investigated the Roman character enough to tell you the causes of this; but I believe, paradoxical as it may seem to you, that, however truly the Roman might say of himself that he was born of Mars, and suckled by the wolf, he was nevertheless, at heart, more of a farmer than a soldier. The exercises of war were with him practical, not poetical; his poetry was in domestic life only, and the object of battle, 'pacis imponere morem.' And the arts are extinguished in his hands, and do not rise again, until, with Gothic chivalry, there comes back into the mind of Europe a passionate delight in war itself, for the sake of war. And then, with the romantic knighthood which can imagine no other noble employment—under the fighting kings of France, England, and Spain; and under the fighting dukeships and citizenships of Italy, art is born again, and rises to her

height in the great valleys of Lombardy and Tuscany, through which there flows not a single stream, from all their Alps or Apennines, that did not once run dark red from battle: and it reaches its culminating glory in the city which gave to history the most intense type of soldier-ship yet seen among men—the city whose armies were led in their assault by their king, led through it to victory by their king, and so led, though that king of theirs was blind, and in the extremity of his age.

And from this time forward, as peace is established or extended in Europe, the arts decline. They reach an unparalleled pitch of costliness, but lose their life, enlist themselves at last on the side of luxury and various corruption, and, among wholly tranquil nations, wither utterly away; remaining only in partial practice among races who, like the French and us, have still the minds, though we cannot all live the lives, of soldiers.

'It may be so,' I can suppose that a philanthropist might exclaim. 'Perish then the arts, if they can flourish only at such a cost. What worth is there in toys of canvas and stone, if compared to the joy and peace of artless domestic life?' And the answer is—truly, in themselves, none. But as expressions of the highest state of the human spirit, their worth is infinite. As results they may be worthless, but, as signs, they are above price. For it is an assured truth that, whenever the faculties of men are at their fullness, they *must* express themselves by art; and to say that a state is without such expression, is to say that it is sunk from its proper level of manly nature. So that, when I tell you that war is the foundation of all the arts, I mean also that it is the foundation of all the high virtues and faculties of men."

How - all the faculties

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It was very strange to me to discover this; and very dreadful—but I saw it to be quite an undeniable fact. The common notion that peace and the virtues of civil life flourished together, I found to be wholly untenable. Peace and the *vices* of civil life only flourish together. We talk of peace and learning, and of peace and plenty, and of peace and civilisation; but I found that those were not the words which the Muse of History coupled together: that, on her lips, the words were—peace and sensuality, peace and selfishness, peace and corruption, peace and death. I found, in brief, that all great nations learned their truth of word, and strength of thought, in war; that they were nourished in war, and wasted by peace; taught by war, and deceived by peace; trained by war, and betrayed by peace—in a word, that they were born in war and expired in peace.

Yet now note carefully, in the second place, it is not *all* war of which this can be said—nor all dragon's teeth, which, sown, will start up into men. It is not the ravage of a barbarian wolf-flock, as under Genseric or Suwarow; nor the habitual restlessness and rapine of mountaineers, as on the old borders of Scotland; nor the occasional struggle of a strong peaceful nation for its life, as in the wars of the Swiss with Austria; nor the contest of merely ambitious nations for extent of power, as in the wars of France under Napoleon, or the just terminated war in America. None of these forms of war build anything but tombs. But the creative or foundational war is that in which the natural restlessness and love of contest among men are disciplined, by consent, into modes of beautiful—though it may be fatal—play: in which the natural ambition and love of power of men are disciplined into the aggressive conquest of surrounding evil: and in

which the natural instincts of self-defence are sanctified by the nobleness of the institutions, and purity of the households, which they are appointed to defend. To such war as this all men are born; in such war as this any man may happily die; and forth from such war as this have arisen, throughout the extent of past ages, all the highest sanctities and virtues of humanity.

I shall therefore divide the war of which I would speak to you into three heads. War for exercise or play; war for dominion; and, war for defence.

I. And first, of war for exercise or play. I speak of it primarily in this light, because, through all past history, manly war has been more an exercise than anything else, among the classes who cause, and proclaim it. It is not a game to the conscript, or the pressed sailor; but neither of these are the causers of it. To the governor who determines that war shall be, and to the youths who voluntarily adopt it as their profession, it has always been a grand pastime; and chiefly pursued because they had nothing else to do. And this is true without any exception. No king whose mind was fully occupied with the development of the inner resources of his kingdom, or with any other sufficing subject of thought, ever entered into war but on compulsion. No youth who was earnestly busy with any peaceful subject of study, or set on any serviceable course of action, ever voluntarily became a soldier. Occupy him, early and wisely, in agriculture or business, in science or in literature, and he will never think of war otherwise than as a calamity. But leave him idle; and, the more brave and active and capable he is by nature, the more he will thirst for some appointed field for action; and find, in the passion and peril of battle, the

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only satisfying fulfilment of his unoccupied being. And from the earliest incipient civilisation until now, the population of the earth divides itself, when you look at it widely, into two races; one of workers, and the other of players—one tilling the ground, manufacturing, building, and otherwise providing for the necessities of life—the other part proudly idle, and continually therefore needing recreation, in which they use the productive and laborious orders partly as their cattle, and partly as their puppets or pieces in the game of death.

Now, remember, whatever virtue or goodliness there may be in this game of war, rightly played, there is none when you thus play it with a multitude of small human pawns.

If you, the gentlemen of this or any other kingdom, choose to make your pastime of contest, do so, and welcome; but set not up these unhappy peasant-pieces upon the green fielded board. If the wager is to be of death, lay it on your own heads, not theirs. A goodly struggle in the Olympic dust, though it be the dust of the grave, the gods will look upon, and be with you in; but they will not be with you, if you sit on the sides of the amphitheatre, whose steps are the mountains of earth, whose arena its valleys, to urge your peasant millions into gladiatorial war. You also, you tender and delicate women, for whom, and by whose command, all true battle has been, and must ever be; you would perhaps shrink now, though you need not, from the thought of sitting as queens above set lists where the jousting game might be mortal. How much more, then, ought you to shrink from the thought of sitting above a theatre pit in which even a few condemned slaves were slaying each other only for your delight! And do

you *not* shrink from the *fact* of sitting above a theatre pit, where—not condemned slaves—but the best and bravest of the poor sons of your people, slay each other—not man to man—as the coupled gladiators ; but race to race, in duel of generations ? You would tell me, perhaps, that you do not sit to see this ; and it is indeed true, that the women of Europe—those who have no heart-interest of their own at peril in the contest—draw the curtains of their boxes, and muffle the openings ; so that from the pit of the circus of slaughter there may reach them only at intervals a half-heard cry and a murmur as of the wind's sighing, when myriads of souls expire. They shut out the death-cries ; and are happy, and talk wittily among themselves. That is the utter literal fact of what our ladies do in their pleasant lives.

Nay, you might answer, speaking for them : 'We do not let these wars come to pass for our play, nor by our carelessness ; we cannot help them. How can any final quarrel of nations be settled otherwise than by war ? ' I cannot now delay, to tell you how political quarrels might be otherwise settled. But grant that they cannot. Grant that no law of reason can be understood by nations : no law of justice submitted to by them ; and that, while questions of a few acres, and of petty cash, can be determined by truth and equity, the questions which are to issue in the perishing or saving of kingdoms can be determined only by the truth of the sword, and the equity of the rifle. Grant this, and even then, judge if it will always be necessary for you to put your quarrel into the hearts of your poor, and sign your treaties with peasants' blood. You would be ashamed to do this in your own private position and power. Why should you not be ashamed also to do it in public place and power ? If you quarrel with your neigh-

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bour, and the quarrel be indeterminable by law, and mortal, you and he do not send your footmen to Battersea fields to fight it out ; nor do you set fire to his tenants' cottages, nor spoil their goods. Now the just or unjust conclusion of the private feud is of little moment, while the just or unjust conclusion of the public feud is of eternal moment : and yet, in this public quarrel, you take your servants' sons from their arms to fight for it, and your servants' food from their lips to support it ; and the black seals on the parchment of your treaties of peace are the deserted hearth and the fruitless field. There is a ghastly ludicrousness in this, as there is mostly in these wide and universal crimes. Here the statement of the very fact of it in the most literal words of the greatest of our English thinkers : (*Carlyle*) .

What, speaking in quite unofficial language, is the net-purport and upshot of war ? To my own knowledge, for example, there dwell and toil, in the British village of Dumdrudge, usually some five hundred souls. From these, by certain 'natural enemies' of the French, there are successively selected, during the French war, say thirty able-bodied men. Dumdrudge, at her own expense, has suckled and nursed them, she has, not without difficulty and sorrow, fed them up to manhood, and even trained them to crafts, so that one can weave, another build, another hammer, and the weakest can stand under thirty stone avoirdupois. Nevertheless, amid much weeping and swearing, they are selected ; all dressed in red ; and shipped away, at the public charges, some two thousand miles, or say only to the south of Spain ; and fed there till wanted.

And now to that same spot in the south of Spain are thirty similar French artisans, from a French Dumdrudge, in like manner wending : till at length, after infinite effort, the two parties come into actual juxtaposition ; and Thirty stands fronting Thirty, each with a gun in his hand.

Straightway the word 'Fire!' is given, and they blow the souls out of one another, and in place of sixty brisk useful craftsmen, the world has sixty dead carcasses, which it must bury, and anon shed tears for.

Had these men any quarrel? Busy as the devil is, not the smallest! They lived far enough apart: were the entirest strangers; nay, in so wide a universe, there was even, unconsciously, by commerce, some mutual helpfulness between them. How then? Simpleton! their governors had fallen out: and instead of shooting one another, had the cunning to make these poor blockheads shoot.

Sartor Resartus.

Positively, then, gentlemen, the game of battle must not, and shall not, ultimately be played this way. But should it be played any way? Should it, if not by your servants, be practised by yourselves? I think, yes. Both history and human instinct seem alike to say, yes. All healthy men like fighting, and like the sense of danger: all brave women like to hear of their fighting, and of their facing danger. This is a fixed instinct in the fine race of them; and I cannot help fancying that fair fight is the best play for them; and that a tournament was a better game than a steeple-chase. The time may perhaps come in France as well as here, for universal hurdle-races and cricketing: but I do not think universal 'crickets' will bring out the best qualities of the nobles of either country. I use, in such question, the test which I have adopted, of the connection of war with other arts; and I reflect how, as a sculptor, I should feel, if I were asked to design a monument for a dead knight, in Westminster Abbey, with a carving of a bat at one end, and a ball at the other. It may be the remains in me only of savage Gothic prejudices; but I had rather carve it with a shield at one end, and a sword at the other. And this, observe, with no reference whatever to any story of duty done, or cause defended. Assume the knight merely to have ridden out occasionally to fight his neighbour for exercise; assume him even a soldier of fortune, and to have gained his bread, and filled his purse at the sword's point. Still, I

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feel as if it were, somehow, grander and worthier in him to have made his bread by sword play than any other play. *What are the three types of man which*

But, remember, so far as this may be true, the game of war is only that in which the *full personal power of the human creature* is brought out in management of its weapons. And this for three reasons:

First, the great justification of this game is that it truly, when well played, determines *who is the best man*—who is the highest bred, the most self-denying, the most fearless, the coolest of nerve, the swiftest of eye and hand. You cannot test these qualities wholly, unless there is a clear possibility of the struggle's ending in death. It is only in the fronting of that condition that the full trial of the man, soul and body, comes out. You may go to your game of wickets, or of hurdles, or of cards, and any knavery that is in you may stay unchallenged all the while. But if the play may be ended at any moment by a lance-thrust, a man will probably make up his accounts a little before he enters it. Whatever is rotten and evil in him will weaken his hand more in holding a sword hilt, than in balancing a billiard cue; and on the whole, the habit of living lightly hearted, in daily presence of death, always has had, and must have, a tendency both to the making and testing of honest men. But for the final testing, observe, you must make the issue of battle strictly dependent on fineness of frame, and firmness of hand. You must not make it the question, which of the combatants has the longest gun, or which has got behind the biggest tree, or which has the wind in his face, or which has gunpowder made by the best chemists, or iron smelted with the best coal, or the angriest mob at his back. Decide your battle,

whether of nations or individuals, on *those* terms ; and you have only multiplied confusion, and added slaughter to iniquity. But decide your battle by pure trial which has the strongest arm, and steadiest heart—and you have gone far to decide a great many matters besides, and to decide them rightly.

And the other reasons for this mode of decision of cause, are the diminution both of the material destructiveness, or cost, and of the physical distress of war. For you must not think that in speaking to you in this (as you may imagine) fantastic praise of battle, I have overlooked the conditions weighing against me. I pray all of you, who have not read, to read with the most earnest attention, Mr. Helps' two essays, on War, and Government, in the first volume of the last series of *Friends in Council*. Everything that can be urged against war is there simply, exhaustively, and most graphically stated. And all, there urged, is true. But the two great counts of evil alleged against war by that most thoughtful writer, hold only against modern war. If you have to take away masses of men from all industrial employment—to feed them by the labour of others—to move them and provide them with destructive machines, varied daily in national rivalry of inventive cost ; if you have to ravage the country which you attack—to destroy, for a score of future years, its roads, its woods, its cities, and its harbours ; and if, finally, having brought masses of men, counted by hundreds of thousands, face to face, you tear those masses to pieces with jagged shot, and leave the fragments of living creatures, countless beyond all help of surgery, to starve and parch, through days of torture, down into clots of clay—what book of accounts shall record the cost of your work ; what book of judgment sentence the guilt of it ?

That, I say, is *modern* war—scientific war—chemical and mechanic war—worse even than the savage's poisoned arrow. And yet you will tell me, perhaps, that any other war than this is impossible now. It may be so; the progress of science cannot, perhaps, be otherwise registered than by new facilities of destruction; and the brotherly love of our enlarging Christianity be only proved by multiplication of murder. Yet hear, for a moment, what war was, in Pagan and ignorant days—what war might yet be, if we could extinguish our science in darkness, and join the heathen's practice to the Christian's theory. I read you this from a book which probably most of you know well, and all ought to know—Muller's *Dorians*;—but I have put the points I wish you to remember in closer connection than in his text.

‘The chief characteristic of the warriors of Sparta was great composure and a subdued strength; the violence of Aristodemus and Isadus being considered as deserving rather of blame than praise; and these qualities in general distinguished the Greeks from the northern Barbarians, whose boldness always consisted in noise and tumult. For the same reason the Spartans *sacrificed to the Muses* before an action; these goddesses being expected to produce regularity and order in battle; as they *sacrificed on the same occasion in Crete to the god of love*, as the confirmer of mutual esteem and shame. Every man put on a crown, when the band of flute-players gave the signal for attack; all the shields of the line glittered with their high polish, and mingled their splendour with the dark red of the purple mantles, which were meant both to adorn the combatant, and to conceal the blood of the wounded; to fall well and decorously being an incentive the more to the most heroic valour. The conduct of the Spartans in battle denotes a

~~Other~~ ceases at the word for gain, or dominion,
or war for defence!

JOHN RUSKIN

high and noble disposition which rejected all the extremes of brutal rage. The pursuit of the enemy ceased when the victory was completed; and after the signal for retreat had been given, all hostilities ceased. The spoiling of arms, at least during the battle, was also interdicted; and the consecration of the spoils of slain enemies to the gods, as, in general, all rejoicings for victory, were considered as ill-omened.'

Such was the war of the greatest soldiers who prayed to heathen gods. What Christian war is, preached by Christian ministers, let any one tell you, who saw the sacred crowning, and heard the sacred flute-playing, and was inspired and sanctified by the divinely-measured and musical language, of any north American regiment preparing for its charge. And what is the relative cost of life in pagan and Christian wars, let this one fact tell you: the Spartans won the decisive battle of Corinth with the loss of eight men; the victors at indecisive Gettysburg confess to the loss of 30,000.

II. I pass now to our second order of war, the commonest among men, that undertaken in desire of dominion. And let me ask you to think for a few moments what the real meaning of this desire of dominion is—first in the minds of kings—then in that of nations.

Now, mind you this first—that I speak either about kings, or masses of men, with a fixed conviction that human nature is a noble and beautiful thing; not a foul nor a base thing. All the sin of men I esteem as their disease, not their nature; as a folly which may be prevented, not a necessity which must be accepted. And my wonder, even when things are at their worst, is always at the height which this human nature can attain: the fact being, that it is

infinite, and capable of infinite height and infinite fall ; but the nature of it—and here is the faith which I would have you hold with me—the *nature* of it is in the nobleness, not in the catastrophe.

Take the faith in its utmost terms. When the captain of the *London* shook hands with his mate, saying 'God speed you ! I will go down with my passengers,' *that* I believe to be 'human nature.' He does not do it from any religious motive—from any hope of reward, or any fear of punishment ; he does it because he is a man. But when a mother, living among the fair fields of merry England, gives her two-year old child to be suffocated under a mattress in her inner room, while the said mother waits and talks outside ; *that* I believe to be *not* human nature. You have the two extremes there, shortly. And you, men, and mothers, who are here face to face with me to-night, I call upon you to say which of these is human, and which inhuman—which 'natural' and which 'unnatural ?' Choose your creed at once, I beseech you : choose it with unshaken choice, choose it for ever. Will you take, for foundation of act and hope, the faith that this man was such as God made him, or that this woman was such as God made her ? Which of them has failed from their nature—from their present, possible, actual nature : not their nature of long ago, but their nature of now ? Which has betrayed it—falsified it ? Did the guardian who died in his trust, die inhumanly, and as a fool ; and did the murderess of her child fulfil the law of her being ? Choose, I say ; infinitude of choices hang upon this.

I have put this to you as a choice, as if you might hold either of these creeds you liked best. But there is in reality no choice for you ; the facts being quite easily ascertainable. You have no business to *think* about this

matter, or to choose in it. The broad fact is, that a human creature of the highest race, and most perfect as a human thing, is invariably both kind and true; and that as you lower the race, you get cruelty and falseness, as you get deformity; and this so steadily and assuredly, that the two great words which, in their first use, meant only perfection of race, have come, by consequence of the invariable connection of virtue with the fine human nature, both to signify benevolence of disposition. The word generous, and the word gentle, both, in their origin, meant only 'of pure race,' but because charity and tenderness are inseparable from this purity of blood, the words which once stood only for pride, now stand as synonyms for virtue.

Now, this being the true power of our inherent humanity, and seeing that all the aim of education should be to develop this; and seeing also what magnificent self-sacrifice the higher classes of men are capable of, for any cause that they understand or feel—it is wholly inconceivable to me how well-educated princes, who ought to be of all gentlemen the gentlest, and of all nobles the most generous, and whose title or royalty means only their function of doing every man '*right*'—how these, I say, throughout history, should so rarely pronounce themselves on the side of the poor and justice, but continually maintain themselves and their own interests by oppression of the poor, and by wresting of justice; and how this should be accepted as so natural, that the word loyalty, which means faithfulness to law, is used as if it were only the duty of a people to be loyal to their king, and not the duty of a king to be infinitely more loyal to his people. How comes it to pass that a captain will die with his passengers, and lean over the gunwale to give the parting boat its course; but that a king will not

usually die with, much less *for*, his passengers—thinks it rather incumbent on his passengers, in any number, to die for *him*? Think, I beseech you, of the wonder of this. The sea captain, not captain by divine right, but only by company's appointment; not a man of royal descent, but only a plebeian who can steer; not with the eyes of the world upon him, but with feeble chance, depending on one poor boat, of his name being ever heard above the wash of the fatal waves—not with the cause of a nation resting on his act, but helpless to save so much as a child from among the lost crowd with whom he resolves to be lost—yet goes down quietly to his grave, rather than break his faith to these few emigrants. But your captain by divine right—your captain with the hues of a hundred shields of kings upon his breast—your captain whose every deed, brave or base, will be illuminated or branded for ever before unescapable eyes of men—your captain whose every thought and act are beneficent, or fatal, from sunrise to setting, blessing as the sunshine, or shadowing as the night—this captain, as you find him in history, for the most part thinks only how he may tax his passengers, and sit at most ease in his state cabin!

For observe, if there had been indeed in the hearts of the rulers of great multitudes of men any such conception of work for the good of those under their command, as there is in the good and thoughtful masters of any small company of men, not only wars for the sake of mere increase of power could never take place, but our idea of power itself would be entirely altered. Do you suppose that to think and act even for a million of men, to hear their complaints, watch their weaknesses, restrain their vices, make laws for them, lead them, day by day, to purer life, is not enough for one man's work? If any of us were

absolute lord only of a district of a hundred miles square, and were resolved on doing our utmost for it; making it feed as large a number of people as possible; making every clod productive, and every rock defensive, and every human being happy; should we not have enough on our hands think you? But if the ruler has any other aim than this; if, careless of the result of his interference, he desire only the authority to interfere; and, regardless of what is ill-done or well-done, cares only that it shall be done at his bidding; if he would rather do two hundred miles' space of mischief, than one hundred miles' space of good, of course he will try to add to his territory; and to add illimitably. But does he add to his power? Do you call it power in a child, if he is allowed to play with the wheels and bands of some vast engine, pleased with their murmur and whirl, till his unwise touch, wandering where it ought not, scatters beam and wheel into ruin? Yet what machine is so vast, so incognisable, as the working of the mind of a nation; what child's touch so wanton, as the word of a selfish king? And yet, how long have we allowed the historian to speak of the extent of the calamity a man causes, as a just ground for his pride; and to extol him as the greatest prince, who is only the centre of the widest error. Follow out this thought by yourselves; and you will find that all power, properly so called, is wise and benevolent. There may be capacity in a drifting fireship to destroy a fleet; there may be venom enough in a dead body to infect a nation: but which of you, the most ambitious, would desire a drifting kingdom, robed in consuming fire, or a poison-dipped sceptre whose touch was mortal? There is no true potency, remember, but that of help, nor true ambition, but ambition to save.

And then, observe farther, this true power, the power of saving, depends neither on multitude of men, nor on

god. It multiplies its strength only by increasing as one great family, in perfect fellowship and brotherhood. And lastly, it does not strengthen itself by seizing dominion over races whom it cannot benefit. Austria is not strengthened, but weakened, by her grasp of Lombardy; and whatever apparent increase of majesty and of wealth may have accrued to us from the possession of India, whether these prove to us ultimately power or weakness, depends wholly on the degree in which our influence on the native race shall be benevolent and exalting. But, as it is at their own peril that any race extend their dominion in mere desire of power, so it is at their own still greater peril that they refuse to undertake aggressive war, according to their force, whenever they are assured that their authority would be helpful and protective. Nor need you listen to any sophistical objection of the impossibility of knowing when a people's help is needed, or when not. Make your national conscience clean, and your national eyes will soon be clear. No man who is truly ready to take part in a noble quarrel will ever stand long in doubt by whom, or in what cause, his aid is needed. I hold it my duty to make no political statement of any special bearing in this presence; but I tell you broadly and boldly, that, within these last ten years, we English have, as a knightly nation, lost our spurs; we have fought where we should not have fought, for gain; and we have been passive, for fear. I tell you that the principle of non-intervention, as now preached among us, is as selfish and cruel as the worst frenzy of conquest, and differs from it only by being not only malignant, but dastardly.

I know, however, that my opinions on this subject differ too widely from those ordinarily held, to be any farther intruded upon you; and therefore I pass lastly to examine the conditions of the third kind of noble war—war

waged simply for defence of the country in which we were born, and for the maintenance and execution of her laws, by whomsoever threatened or defied. It is to this duty that I suppose most men entering the army consider themselves in reality to be bound, and I want you now to reflect what the laws of mere defence are; and what the soldier's duty, as now understood, or supposed to be understood. You have solemnly devoted yourselves to be English soldiers, for the guardianship of England. I want you to feel what this vow of yours indeed means, or is gradually coming to mean. You take it upon you, first, while you are sentimental schoolboys. You don't understand perhaps why I call you 'sentimental' schoolboys, when you go into the army? Because, on the whole, it is the love of adventure, of excitement, of fine dress and of the pride of fame, all which are sentimental motives, which chiefly make a boy like going into the Guards better than into a counting-house. You fancy, perhaps, that there is a severe sense of duty mixed with these peacocky motives? and in the best of you, there is; but do not think that it is principle. If you cared to do your duty to your country in a prosaic and unsentimental way, depend upon it there is now truer duty to be done in raising harvests, than in burning them; more in building houses, than in shelling them—more in winning money by your own work, wherewith to help men, than in taxing other people's work, for money wherewith to slay men—more duty finally, in honest and unselfish living than in honest and unselfish dying, though that seems to your boys' eyes the bravest. So far then, as for your own honour, and the honour of your families, you choose brave death in a red coat before brave life in a black one, you are sentimental; and now see what this passionate

vow of yours comes to. For a little while you ride, and you hunt tigers or savages, you shoot, and are shot; you are happy, and proud, always, and honoured and wept if you die; and you are satisfied with your life, and with the end of it; believing, on the whole, that good rather than harm of it comes to others, and much pleasure to you. But as the sense of duty enters into your forming minds, the vow takes another aspect. You find that you have put yourselves into the hand of your country as a weapon. You have vowed to strike, when she bids you; to stay scabbarded when she bids you; all that you need answer for is, that you fail not in her grasp. And there is goodness in this, and greatness, if you can trust the hand and heart of the Britomart who has braced you to her side, and are assured that when she leaves you sheathed in darkness, there is no need for your flash to the sun. But remember, good and noble as this state may be, it is a state of slavery. There are different kinds of slaves and different masters. Some slaves are scourged to their work by whips, others are scourged to it by restlessness or ambition. It does not matter what the whip is; it is none the less a whip, because you have cut thongs for it out of your own souls: the fact, so far, of slavery, is in being driven to your work without thought, at another's bidding. Again, some slaves are bought with money, and others with praise. It matters not what the purchase-money is. The distinguishing sign of slavery is to have a price and be bought for it. Again, it matters not what kind of work you are set on; some slaves are set to forced diggings, others to forced marches; some dig furrows, others field-works, and others graves. Some press the juice of reeds, and some the juice of vines and some the blood of men. The fact of the captivity is the same whatever work

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we are set upon, though the fruits of the toil may be different. But remember, in thus vowing ourselves to be the slaves of any master, it ought to be some subject of fore-thought with us, what work he is likely to put us upon. You may think that the whole duty of a soldier is to be passive, that it is the country you have left behind who is to command, and you have only to obey. But are you sure that you have left *all* your country behind, or that the part of it you have so left is indeed the best part of it? Suppose—and, remember, it is quite conceivable—that you yourselves are indeed the best of England: that you, who have become the slaves, ought to have been the masters; and that those who are the masters, ought to have been the slaves! If it is a noble and wholehearted England, whose bidding you are bound to do, it is well; but if you are yourselves the best of her heart, and the England you have left be but a half-hearted England, how say you of your obedience? You were too proud to become shopkeepers: are you satisfied then to become the servants of shopkeepers? You were too proud to become merchants or farmers yourselves: will you have merchants or farmers then for your field-m Marshals? You had no gifts of special grace for Exeter Hall: will you have some gifted person thereat for your commander-in-chief, to judge of your work, and reward it? You imagine yourselves to be the army of England: how if you should find yourselves, at last, only the police of her manufacturing towns, and the beadles of her little Bethels?

It is not so yet, nor will be so, I trust, for ever; but what I want you to see, and to be assured of, is, that the ideal of soldiership is not mere passive obedience and bravery; that, so far from this, no country is in a healthy state which has separated, even in a small degree, her civil from

her military power. All states of the world, however great, fall at once when they use mercenary armies; and, although it is a less instant form of error (because involving no national taint of cowardice), it is yet an error no less ultimately fatal—it is the error especially of modern times, of which we cannot yet know all the calamitous consequences—to take away the best blood and strength of the nation, all the soul-substance of it that is brave, and careless of reward, and scornful of pain, and faithful in trust; and to cast that into steel, and make a mere sword of it; taking away its voice and will; but to keep the worst part of the nation—whatever is cowardly, avaricious, sensual, and faithless—and to give to this the voice, to this the authority, to this the chief privilege, where there is least capacity, of thought. The fulfilment of your vow for the defence of England will by no means consist in carrying out such a system. You are not true soldiers, if you only mean to stand at a shop-door, to protect shop-boys who are cheating inside. A soldier's vow to his country is that he will die for the guardianship of her domestic virtue, of her righteous laws, and of her any-way challenged or endangered honour. A state without virtue, without laws, and without honour, he is bound *not* to defend; nay, bound to redress by his own right hand that which he sees to be base in her. So sternly is this the law of Nature and life, that a nation once utterly corrupt can only be redeemed by a military despotism—never by talking, nor by its free effort. And the health of any state consists simply in this; that in it, those who are wisest shall also be strongest; its rulers should be also its soldiers; or, rather, by force of intellect more than of sword, its soldiers also its rulers. Whatever the hold which the aristocracy of England has on the heart of England, in that they are still always in front of her

battles, this hold will not be enough, unless they are also in front of her thoughts. And truly her thoughts need good captain's leading now, if ever! Do you know what, by this beautiful division of labour (her brave men fighting, and her cowards thinking), she has come at last to think? Here is a bit of a paper in my hand,* a good one too, and an honest one; quite representative of the best common public thought of England at this moment; and it is holding forth in one of its leaders upon our 'social welfare'—upon our 'vivid life'—upon the 'political supremacy of Great Britain.' And what do you think all these are owing to? To what our English sires have done for us, and taught us, age after age? No: not to that. To our honesty of heart, or coolness of head, or steadiness of will? No: not to these. To our thinkers, or our statesmen, or our poets, or our captains, or our martyrs, or the patient labour of our poor? No: not to these; or at least not to these in any chief measure. Nay, says the journal, 'more than any agency, it is the cheapness and abundance of our coal which have made us what we are.' If it be so, then 'ashes to ashes' be our epitaph! and the sooner

* I do not care to refer to the journal quoted, because the article was unworthy of its general tone, though in order to enable the audience to verify the quoted sentence, I left the number containing it on the table, when I gave this lecture. But a saying of Baron Liebig's, quoted at the head of a leader on the same subject in *The Daily Telegraph* of January 11, 1866, summarily digests and presents the maximum folly of modern thought in this respect. 'Civilisation,' says the Baron, 'is the economy of power, and English power is coal.' Not altogether so, my chemical friend. Civilisation is the making of civil persons, which is a kind of the distillation of which alembics are incapable, and does not at all imply the turning of a small company of gentlemen into a large company of iron-mongers. And English power (what little of it may be left) is by no means coal, but, indeed, of that which, 'when the whole world turns to coal, then chiefly lives.'

the better. I tell you, gentlemen of England, if ever you would have your country breathe the pure breath of heaven again, and receive again a soul into her body, instead of rotting into a carcase, blown up in the belly with carbonic acid (and great *that* way), you must think, and feel, for your England, as well as fight for her: you must teach her that all the true greatness she ever had or ever can have, she won while her fields were green and her faces ruddy. Gentlemen, I tell you, solemnly, that the day is coming when the soldiers of England must be her tutors: and the captains of her army, captains also of her mind.

And now, remember, you soldier youths, who are thus in all ways the hope of your country; or must be, if she have any hope: remember that your fitness for all future trust depends upon what you are now. No good soldier in his old age was ever careless or indolent in his youth. Many a giddy and thoughtless boy has become a good bishop, or a good lawyer, or a good merchant; but no such an one ever became a good general. I challenge you, in all history, to find a record of a good soldier who was not grave and earnest in his youth. And, in general, I have no patience with people who talk about 'the thoughtlessness of youth' indulgently. I had infinitely rather hear of thoughtless old age, and the indulgence due to *that*. When a man has done his work, and nothing can any way be materially altered in his fate, let him forget his toil, and jest with his fate, if he will; but what excuse can you find for wilfulness of thought, at the very time when every crisis of future fortune hangs on your decisions? A youth thoughtless! when all the happiness of his home for ever depends on the chances, or the passions, of an hour! A youth thoughtless! when the career of all his days depends on the opportunity of a moment! A youth

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thoughtless ! when his every act is a foundation-stone of future conduct, and every imagination a fountain of life or death ! Be thoughtless in *any* after years, rather than now—though, indeed, there is only one place where a man may be nobly thoughtless—his deathbed. No thinking should ever be left to be done there.

Having, then, resolved that you will not waste recklessly, but earnestly use, these early days of yours, remember that all the duties of her children to England may be summed in two words—industry, and honour. I say first, industry, for it is in this that soldier youth are especially tempted to fail. Yet, surely, there is no reason, because your life may possibly or probably be shorter than other men's that you should therefore waste more recklessly the portion of it that is granted you ; neither do the duties of your profession, which require you to keep your bodies strong, in any wise involve the keeping of your minds weak. So far from that, the experience, the hardship, and the activity of a soldier's life render his powers of thought more accurate than those of other men : and while, for others, all knowledge is often little more than a means of amusement, there is no form of science which a soldier may not at some time or other find bearing on business of life and death. A young mathematician may be excused for languor in studying curves to be described only with a pencil ; but not in tracing those which are to be described with a rocket. Your knowledge of a wholesome herb may involve the feeding of an army ; and acquaintance with an obscure point of geography, the success of a campaign. Never waste an instant's time, therefore ; the sin of idleness is a thousand-fold greater in you than in other youths ; for the fates of those who will one day be under your command hang upon your know-

ledge ; lost moments now will be lost lives then, and every instant which you carelessly take for play, you buy with blood. But there is one way of wasting time, of all the vilest, because it wastes, not time only, but the interest and energy of your minds. Of all the ungentlemanly habits into which you can fall, the vilest is betting, or interesting yourselves in the issues of betting. It unites nearly every condition of folly and vice ; you concentrate your interest upon a matter of chance, instead upon a subject of true knowledge ; and you back opinions which you have no grounds for forming, merely because they are your own. All the insolence of egotism is in this ; and so far as the love of excitement is complicated with the hope of winning money, you turn yourselves into the basest sort of tradesmen—those who live by speculation. Work faithfully, and you will put yourselves in possession of a glorious and enlarging happiness ; not such as can be won by the speed of a horse, or marred by the obliquity of a ball.

First, then, by industry you must fulfil your vow to your country ; but all industry and earnestness will be useless unless they are consecrated by your resolution to be in all things men of honour ; not honour in the common sense only, but in the highest. Rest on the force of the two main words in the great verse '*integer vitæ, scelesque purus.*' You have vowed your life to England ; give it her wholly—a bright, stainless, perfect life—a knightly life. Because you have to fight with machines instead of with lances, there may be a necessity for more ghastly danger, but there is none for less worthiness of character, than in olden time. You may be true knights yet, though perhaps not *equites* ; you may have to call yourselves 'canonry' instead of 'chivalry,' but that is no reason why you should not call yourselves true men. So

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the first thing you have to see to in becoming soldiers is that you make yourselves wholly true. Courage is a mere matter of course among any ordinarily well-born youths; but neither truth nor gentleness is matter of course. You must bind them like shields about your necks: you must write them on the tables of your hearts. Though it be not exacted of you, yet exact it of yourselves, this vow of stainless truth. Your hearts are, if you leave them unstirred, as tomb in which a god lies buried. Vow yourselves crusaders to redeem that sacred sepulchre. And remember, before all things—for no other memory will be so protective of you—that the highest law of this knightly truth is that under which it is vowed to women. Whomsoever else you deceive, whomsoever you injure, whomsoever you leave unaided, you must not deceive, nor injure, nor leave unaided, according to your power, any woman of whatever rank. Believe me, every virtue of the higher phases of manly character begins in this—in truth and modesty before the face of all maidens; in truth and pity, or truth and reverence, to all womanhood.

Very noble sentiment

And now let me turn for a moment to you, wives and maidens, who are the souls of soldiers; to you, mothers, who have devoted your children to the great hierarchy of war. Let me ask you to consider what part you have to take for the aid of those who love you; for if you fail in your part they cannot fulfil theirs; such absolute help-mates you are that no man can stand without that help, nor labour in his own strength.

I know your hearts, and that the truth of them never fails when an hour of trial comes which you recognise for such. But you know not when the hour of trial first finds you, nor when it verily finds you. You imagine that you

are only called upon to wait and to suffer; to surrender and to mourn. You know that you must not weaken the hearts of your husbands and lovers, even by the one fear of which those hearts are capable—the fear of parting from you, or of causing you grief. Through weary years of separation; through fearful expectancies of unknown fate; through the tenfold bitterness of the sorrow which might so easily have been joy, and the tenfold yearning for glorious life struck down in its prime; through all these agonies you fail not, and never will fail. But your trial is not in these. To be heroic in danger is little; you are Englishwomen. To be heroic in change and sway of fortune is little; for do you not love? To be patient through the great chasm and pause of loss is little; for do you not still love in heaven? But to be heroic in happiness; to bear yourselves gravely and righteously in the dazzling of the sunshine of morning; not to forget the God in whom you trust, when He gives you most; not to fail those who trust you, when they seem to need you least; this is the difficult fortitude. It is not in the pining of absence, not in the peril of battle, not in the wasting of sickness, that your prayer should be most passionate, or your guardianship most tender. Pray, mothers and maidens, for your young soldiers in the bloom of their pride; pray for them, while the only dangers round them are in their own wayward will; watch you, and pray, when they have to face, not death, but temptation. But it is this fortitude also for which there is the crowning reward. Believe me, the whole course and character of your lovers' lives is in your hands; what you would have them be, they shall be, if you not only desire to have them so, but deserve to have them so; for they are but mirrors in which you will see yourselves imaged. If you are frivolous, they will be so also; if you have no understanding of the scope of their

"Disguise it as you will,
It is war. still."

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The one who roars in
duty, they also will forget it; they will listen—they *can* listen—to no other interpretation of it than that uttered from your lips. Bid them be brave; they will be brave for you: bid them be cowards; and, how noble soever they be, they will quail for you. Bid them be wise, and they will be wise for you: mock at their counsel, they will be fools for you: such and so absolute is your rule over them. You fancy, perhaps, as you have been told so often, that a wife's rule should only be over her husband's house, not over his mind. Ah, no! the true rule is just the reverse of that; a true wife, in her husband's house, is his servant: it is in his heart that she is queen. Whatever of best he can conceive, it is her part to be; whatever of highest he can hope, it is hers to promise; all that is dark in him she must purge into purity; all that is failing in him she must strengthen into truth: from her, through all the world's clamour, he must win his praise; in her, through all the world's warfare, he must find his peace.

And, now, but one word more. You may wonder, perhaps, that I have spoken all this night in praise of war. Yet, truly, if it might be, I, for one, would fain join in the cadence of hammer-strokes that should beat swords into ploughshares: and that this cannot be, is not the fault of us men. It is *your* fault. Wholly yours. Only by your command, or by your permission, can any contest take place among us. And the real, final, reason for all the poverty, misery, and rage of battle, throughout Europe, is simply that you women, however good, however religious, however self-sacrificing for those whom you love, are too selfish and too thoughtless to take pains for any creature out of your own immediate circles. You fancy that you are sorry for the pain of others. Now I just tell

you this, that if the usual course of war, instead of unroofing peasants' houses, and ravaging peasants' fields, merely broke the china upon your own drawing-room tables, no war in civilised countries would last a week. I tell you more, that at whatever moment you chose to put a period to war, you could do it with less trouble than you take any day to go out to dinner. You know, or at least you might know if you would think, that every battle you hear of has many widows and orphans. We have, none of us, heart enough truly to mourn with these. But at least we might put on the outer symbols of mourning with them. Let but every Christian lady who has conscience toward God, vow that she will mourn, at least outwardly, for His killed creatures. Your praying is useless, and your church-going mere mockery of God, if you have not plain obedience in you enough for this. Let every lady in the upper classes of civilised Europe simply vow that, while any cruel war proceeds, she will wear *black*—a mute's black—with no jewel, no ornament, no excuse for, or evasion into, prettiness. I tell you again, no war would last a week.

And lastly. You women of England are all now shrieking with one voice—you and your clergymen together—because you hear of your Bibles being attacked. If you choose to obey your Bibles, you will never care who attacks them. It is just because you never fulfil a single downright precept of the Book, that you are so careful for its credit: and just because you don't care to obey its whole words, that you are so particular about the letters of them. The Bible tells you to dress plainly, and you are mad for finery; the Bible tells you to have pity on the poor, and you crush them under your carriage wheels; the Bible tells you to do judgment and justice, and you do

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not know, nor care to know, so much as what the Bible word 'justice' means. Do but learn so much of God's truth as that comes to ; know what He means when He tells you to be just : and teach your sons, that their bravery is but a fool's boast, and their deeds but a firebrand's tossing, unless they are indeed Just men, and Perfect in the Fear of God ; and you will soon have no more war, unless it be indeed such as is willed by Him, of whom, though Prince of Peace, it is also written 'In Righteousness He doth judge, and make war.'

John Ruskin

XI

A SENSITIVE AGITATOR

(RICHARD COBDEN)

TWENTY-THREE years ago—and it is very strange that it should be so many years—when Mr. Cobden first began to hold Free-trade meetings in the agricultural districts, people there were much confused. They could not believe that Mr. Cobden they saw to be the “Mr. Cobden that was in the papers.” They expected a burly demagogue from the North, ignorant of rural matters, absorbed in manufacturing ideas, appealing to class prejudices—hostile and exciting hostility. They saw a “sensitive and almost slender man, of shrinking nerve, full of rural ideas, who proclaimed himself the son of a farmer, who understood and could state the facts of agricultural life far better than most agriculturists, who was most anxious to convince every one of what he thought the truth, and who was almost more anxious not to offend any one.” The tradition is dying out, but Mr. Cobden acquired, even in those days of Free-trade agitation, a sort of agricultural popularity. He excited a personal interest, he left what may be called a *sense* of himself among his professed enemies. They were surprised at finding that he was not what they thought; they were charmed to find that he was not what they expected; they were fascinated to find what he was. The same feeling has been evident at his sudden death—a death at least which was to the mass of occupied men sudden. Over political Belgravia—the last part of English society Mr. Cobden ever cultivated—there was a sadness. Every one felt that England had lost an individuality which it could never have again, which was of the highest value, which was in its own kind altogether unequalled.

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What used to strike the agricultural mind as different from what they fancied, and most opposite to a Northern agitator, was a sort of playfulness. They could hardly believe that the lurking smile, the perfectly magical humour which they were so much struck by, could be that of a "Manchester Man." Mr. Cobden used to say, "I have as much right as any man to call myself the representative of the tenant farmer, for I am a farmer's son, and the son of a Sussex farmer." But agriculturists keenly felt that this was not the explanation of the man they saw. Perhaps they could not have thoroughly explained, but they perfectly knew that they were hearing a man, of singular and most peculiar genius, fitted as if by "natural selection" for the work he had to do, and not wasting a word on any other work or anything else, least of all upon himself.

Mr. Cobden was very anomalous in two respects. He was a sensitive agitator. Generally, an agitator is a rough man of the O'Connell type, who says anything himself, and lets others say anything. You "peg into me and I will peg into you, and let us see which will win," is his motto. But Mr. Cobden's habit and feeling were utterly different. He never spoke ill of any one. He arraigned principles, but not persons. We fearlessly say that after a career of agitation of thirty years, not one single individual has—we do not say a valid charge, but a producible charge—a charge which he would wish to bring forward against Mr. Cobden. You cannot find the man who says, "Mr. Cobden said this of me, and it was not true." This may seem trivial praise, and on paper it looks easy. But to those who know the great temptations of actual life it means very much. How would any other great agitator, O'Connell or Hunt or

Cobbett look, if tried by such a test? Very rarely, if even ever in history, has a man achieved so much by his words—been victor in what was thought at the time to be a class struggle—and yet spoken so little evil as Mr. Cobden. There is hardly a word to be found, perhaps, even now, which the recording angel would wish to blot out. We may on other grounds object to an agitator who lacerates no one, but no watchful man of the world will deny that such an agitator has vanquished one of life's most imperious and difficult temptations.

Perhaps some of our readers may remember as vividly as we do a curious instance of Mr. Cobden's sensitiveness. He said at Drury Lane Theatre, in tones of feeling, almost of passion, curiously contrasting with the ordinary coolness of his nature, "I could not serve with Sir Robert Peel." After more than twenty years, the curiously thrilling tones of that phrase still live in our ears. Mr. Cobden alluded to the charge which Sir Robert Peel had made, or half made, that the Anti-Corn Law League and Mr. Cobden had, by their action and agitation, conduced to the actual assassination of Mr. Drummond, his secretary, and the intended assassination of himself—Sir Robert Peel. No excuse or palliation could be made for such an assertion except the most important one, that Peel's nerves were as susceptible and sensitive as Mr. Cobden's. But the profound feeling with which Mr. Cobden spoke of it is certain. He felt it as a man feels an unjust calumny, an unfounded stain on his honour.

Mr. Disraeli said on one occasion (and he has made many extraordinary assertions, but this is about the queerest), "Mr. Cobden had a profound reverence for tradition." If there is any single quality which Mr. Cobden had not,

it was traditional reverence. But probably Mr. Disraeli meant what was most true, that Mr. Cobden had a delicate dislike of offending other men's opinions. He dealt with them tenderly. He did not like to have his own creed coarsely attacked, and he did—he could not help doing—as he would be done by: he never attacked any man's creed coarsely or roughly, or in any way except by what he in his best conscience thought the fairest and justest argument.

This sensitive nature is one marked peculiarity in Mr. Cobden's career as an agitator, and another is, that he was an agitator for men of business.

Generally speaking, occupied men charged with the responsibilities and laden with the labour of grave affairs are jealous of agitation. They know how much may be said against any one who is responsible for anything. They know how unanswerable such charges nearly always are, and how false they easily may be. A capitalist can hardly help thinking, "Suppose a man was to make a speech against my mode of conducting my own business, how much he would have to say!" Now it is an exact description of Mr. Cobden, that by the personal magic of a single-minded practicability he made men of business abandon this objection. He made them rather like the new form of agitation. He made them say, "How business-like, how wise, just what it would have been right to do."

Mr. Cobden of course was not the discoverer of the Free-trade principle. He did not first find out that the Corn Laws were bad laws. But he was the most effectual of those who discovered how the Corn Laws were to be repealed, how Free-trade was to change from a doctrine of

the *Wealth of Nations* into a principle of tariffs and a fact of real life. If a thing was right, to Mr. Cobden's mind it ought to be done ; and as Adam Smith's doctrines were admitted on theory, he could not believe that they ought to lie idle, that they ought to be "bedridden in the dormitory of the understanding."

Lord Houghton once said, "In my time political economy books used to begin, 'Suppose a man on an island.'" Mr. Cobden's speeches never began so. He was altogether a man of business speaking to men of business. Some of us may remember the almost arch smile with which he said, "The House of Commons does not seem quite to understand the difference between a cotton mill and a print work." It was almost amusing to him to think that the first assembly of the first mercantile nation could be, as they were and are, very dim in their notions of the most material divisions of their largest industry. It was this evident and first-hand familiarity with real facts and actual life which enabled Mr. Cobden to inspire a curiously diffused confidence in all matter-of-fact men. He diffused a kind of "economical faith." People in those days had only to say, "Mr. Cobden said so," and other people went and "believed it."

Mr. Cobden had nothing in the received sense classical about his oratory, but it is quite certain that Aristotle, the greatest teacher of the classical art of rhetoric, would very keenly have appreciated his oratory. This sort of economical faith is exactly what he would most have valued, what he most prescribed. He said : "A speaker should convince his audience that he was a likely person to know." This was exactly what Mr. Cobden did. And the matter-of-fact philosopher would have much liked Mr.

Cobden's habit of "coming to the point." He would not, indeed, have been able to conceive a "League Meeting." There has never, perhaps, been another time in the history of the world when excited masses of men and women hung on the words of one talking political economy. It may be said, and truly, that the interest of the subject was Mr. Cobden's felicity, not his mind; but it may be said with equal truth that the excitement was much greater when he was speaking than when any one else was speaking. By a kind of keenness of nerve, he said the exact word most fitted to touch, not the bare abstract understanding, but the quick individual perceptions of his hearers.

We do not wish to make this article a mere panegyric. Mr. Cobden was far too manly to like such folly. His mind was very peculiar, and like all peculiar minds had its sharp limits. He had what we may call a supplementary understanding, that is, a bold, original intellect, acting on a special experience, and striking out views and principles not known to or neglected by ordinary men. He did not possess the traditional education of his country, and did not understand it. The solid heritage of transmitted knowledge has more value, we believe, than he would have accorded to it. There was too a defect in business faculty not identical, but perhaps not altogether without analogy. The late Mr. James Wilson used to say, "Cobden's administrative power I do not think much of, but he is most valuable in counsel, always original, always shrewd, and not at all extreme." He was not altogether equal to meaner men in some beaten tracks and pathways of life, though he was far their superior in all matters requiring an original stress of speculation, an innate energy of thought.

WALTER BAGEHOT

It may be said, and truly said, that he has been cut off before his time. A youth and manhood so spent as his well deserved a green old age. But so it was not to be. He has left us, quite independently of his positive works, of the repeal of the Corn Laws, of the French treaty, a rare gift—the gift of a unique character. There has been nothing before Richard Cobden like him in English history, and perhaps there will not be anything like him. And his character is of the simple, emphatic, picturesque sort which most easily, when opportunities are given as they were to him, goes down to posterity. May posterity learn from him! Only last week we hoped to have learned something ourselves.

But what is before us we know not,
And we know not what shall succeed.

Walter Bagehot

Muller

XII

POLITICAL EDUCATION¹

AMIDST all the multifarious duties that fall to my lot, some pleasant and some less pleasant, you have combined to give me to-day a really happy afternoon's outing. I have the greatest admiration, Sir Philip, for this great work upon which you have embarked. It is the grain of mustard seed which will become a great tree that may overshadow the earth, and I am proud to meet so many of those who are fired with the same enthusiasm that you have and that I have for education of the kind that you provide here. It is a great privilege to be allowed to speak to you for a few minutes on that subject. There are few movements in this country in my view that augur better for the future, or that in themselves bear a higher and a truer tribute to the best that is in our nature than the great, voluntary efforts that are being made in this country for adult education; and if there be anyone here who may at times feel a passing regret for the closing of the great houses of England, it must be an immense consolation to see from the ashes of the past springing up a new and hopeful life like this within their walls. That can do nothing but good for the men who come here, and for the country of which they are a part.

I have a peculiar sympathy with adult education, because I have followed it to the best of my ability all my life. I was very much interested to find a peculiar instance recently of that interest which all English people take in education, not always instructed, but always present, because, when I became Prime Minister, a well-known lady

¹ Philip Stott College, 27th September, 1923.

in society whose acquaintance I had not had the pleasure of making, asked this question of a friend of mine: "Is the new Prime Minister what you would call an educated man?" I doubt very much whether she knew what was implied by the word "educated;" but it showed, at any rate, that she felt that education was a good thing in itself, and a thing which it was desirable should be possessed by anyone aspiring to the post of Prime Minister. That is all to the good. But I expect all of you have learned, as I have, that education is a process and a thing that is never finished. And it is a wonderful thing that here, in this movement, we find one more instance in our history of that triumph of voluntary effort from which have sprung all the best movements and the best things in our country from the beginning of its history. You take a movement like that of the Boy Scouts; it did not originate with the War Office. You take the Salvation Army; it did not come from Canterbury. The Franciscans did not come from Rome; and in the same way this great movement of education did not take its origin in Whitehall. It sprang—where all these things have sprung from—it sprang from the very heart of the people, and that is what gives it its strength, and that is what is going to continue to give power to the movement.

I was very impressed by a few words that I read in a prospectus of the College, that the aim of the curriculum here is "to furnish instruction which will equip the trade unionist or the co-operator, on the one hand, to take an active and effective interest in the affairs of his or her society, and on the other, a Parliamentarian or a business man to discharge with greater knowledge and insight such duties of citizenship as may devolve upon him."

These words go right down to the root of the matter, because the great task of this generation, in my view, is to

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save democracy, to preserve it and to inspire it. The ideal of democracy is a very fine one, but no ideals can run of themselves, and if democracy is to be preserved and yield the fruits that those who believe in it would fain see, the only way it can be done is by all the individuals, according to their power, equipping themselves sufficiently to keep the whole mass sweet and true, and to preserve in their plenitude and sanity the ideals that inspire them. I have used this figure of speech before, but I want to use it again. All government of the people can be represented, as it were, on the circumference of a wheel, and government runs in very varying degree from the most complete and absolute autocracy, step by step, to chaos, and you find instances in history of governments passing through every phase on that circumference; often autocracy will end in chaos, and chaos will, with equal infallibility, lead back once again to autocracy. Now we are at a point in that wheel, and that point is Democracy, with representative government. We have to remember that the price of liberty is eternal vigilance, and, I may add, eternal knowledge, eternal sympathy, and eternal understanding; and it is our duty in this generation to keep the State steady at the point to which we have attained, knowing full well the risks that lie on either hand by slipping back in the one direction of the wheel or the other, the one direction drawing to a curtailment of our liberty, the other direction being that in which liberty tends to licence.

Now, surely, when we want to educate ourselves for the purpose of citizenship, whatever the immediate course of study may be, whether it be history or economics, whether it be humane letters, whether it be mathematics, the object of such education must always be the same, and to my mind the purpose of such education—a purpose

which we try to put in our mind—is always twofold; it is, in the first place, to clear the mind of cant, and in the second place not to rest content with having learnt enough to follow the syllogism, knowing perfectly well that to follow the syllogism alone is a short cut to the bottomless pit, unless you are able to detect the fallacies that lie by the wayside. If you can clear the mind of cant and detect the fallacy, whatever guise it may be wearing, I think you have made a long step forward in the education that every citizen in a democracy that may hope to endure must have. I think that we all of us realize to-day that no civilized community is bound necessarily and by an inscrutable fate to progress, that there are such things in civilization as checks, that there is such a thing as retrogression, and that the mere existence of a civilized community is no guarantee either for its continuance or for its progress—in other words, that unless we are the faithful guardians of such civilization as we have already attained to, we run the risk of seeing the whole of the progress that has been made with such infinite labour up to our own time gradually slipping back and back and back.

No one had harder words to say than Lord Morley about teaching carried on in any other spirit than that which I have endeavoured to describe. Teaching, above all things in this world, ought to be absolutely honest and absolutely free. The teacher should never be the servant of the State in this way, that he preaches and teaches what he thinks the Government would like to have him do, whether that Government come from the Right or from the Left or from the Centre. The whole object of the teacher should be to set forth the truth as he conceives it, and the whole object of the pupil should be so to prepare and develop his mind that he may, as occasion arises, when he leaves here, find

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himself prepared by will and competent by training to exercise a right judgment in all things.

Lord Morley, when he had laid stress on the everlasting importance of sifting the value of evidence and recognizing how the bias of human nature so often prevented men from acquiring the necessary ability so to sift evidence, referred to those who taught with bias and for propaganda in this way: "There are limits to our patience with the quackish fungoids," and it is the "quackish fungoids," wherever they may be found, that you have to go out into the world to fight. "Quackish fungoids" are found in all sections of the community and in all schools of thought. They are not inherent in any one class. They are not necessarily inherent in any one party; but they are growths which must be cleared away if progress is to be made in our country, and they are growths which the training you receive here will enable you to do your part in clearing away when you leave these pleasant surroundings for the stress and the struggle of the larger world outside.

We have to learn—and it is no easy lesson—to submit all the passions and prejudices which the best of us find to be component parts of ourselves at times to the stern and acid test of the discipline of truth. That is not an easy lesson to learn, or more people would have learned it; but I think one of the most hopeful signs of the times to-day is that all over the kingdom—north and south and east and west—there are men and women who, in dreaming of a better and higher future for their country, are yet well aware that that future cannot be attained by dreams alone, and they want so to qualify and equip themselves that in that struggle for better things they may be able to play a potent and a worthy part. There is no better and there is no higher ambition, and I am perfectly certain that it is to

help that ambition that Sir Philip Stott was moved to do what he has done, a great work for which every one in this room is indeed grateful, a work for which, if I am right, generations yet unborn may arise and call him blessed.

This country of ours has been the birthplace and the home of some of the greatest movements that have yet arisen for human freedom and human progress, and the strength of our race is not yet exhausted. We have confused ourselves in Great Britain of recent years by a curious diffidence, and by a fear of relying upon ourselves. The result has been that many of those who have been eager for the progress of our country have only succeeded in befogging themselves and their fellow-countymen, by filling their bellies with the east wind of German Socialism and Russian Communism and French Syndicalism. Rather should they have looked deep into the hearts of their own people, relying on that common sense and political sense that has never failed our race, from which sufficient sustenance could be drawn to bring this country once more through all her troubles. There will be found that sense, which far from following at the tail of exploded Continental theorists, is ready once more to lead the way of the world as she was destined to do from the beginning of time, and to show other peoples, many peoples who have not yet learned what real political freedom is, that the mother of political freedom is still capable of guiding the way to her children and her children's children.

Do not let us ever be confused by the advance in material prosperity and material knowledge, and let us never confuse mere acceleration with civilization. Civilization is a far deeper and more profound thing than that, and there is a very real danger, in an age when science makes such wonderful advances and can bring so much in the way of material

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comfort and material knowledge before people without any trouble on their part to acquire it or understand—there is at that time a very great danger that the higher, the more spiritual, the only lasting qualities of civilization may be submerged in the lower and inferior, so that the last state of that community may be worse than the first.

Then, I think, there is one other great advantage to be derived from the whole-hearted pursuit of knowledge, which has been the impelling force that has brought you from all over the United Kingdom to take advantage of the course which you can obtain here. I think you learn—not by being taught, but by that instinct which comes with wider knowledge—you learn a healthy distrust of rhetoric. If there is any class to be regarded with suspicion in a democracy it is the rhetorician—the man who plays on half-educated people with fallacies which they are incapable of detecting. More than one democracy has been wrecked by that. We do not want to see a democracy like ours, in which we have faith, and which we believe is destined to do such great things for the world, wrecked on any such ignoble rocks. When I was about eighteen years of age, I remember reading a verse of Froude's, in his *Short Studies*, which made a profound impression upon me at that age, because, when I was a boy, as is the case with many other boys, I was rather the slave of fine language and beautiful expression, and I suddenly came with a shock on the words: "Oratory is the harlot of the arts." There is profound truth in that, and I should like very much, if I had time, to give the members that as a text for an essay. It would be very interesting to see the illustrations which historical students might give in proof of the words of that thesis.

There are few things, again, to which, at the present

day, we should pay more attention than this—and this again needs education, and the education which you are giving yourselves to enable you to accomplish the end in view—and that is to judge of the value of evidence. I suppose there is no man to whom the cause of the education of the people in this country—and very largely adult education—is nearer the heart than it was to a great Englishman who has just died, I mean Lord Morley. Lord Morley spoke on this subject nearly fifty years ago, and he came back to it again and again; so recently as just before the war, speaking to the Manchester students, he used these words, which I feel I must read to you:

“Generous aspiration, exalted enthusiasm, is made to do duty for renewed scrutiny. The ardent spirits see every fact or circumstance that makes their way and are blind to every other. Inflexible preconceptions holding the helm, they exaggerate. Their sense of proportion is bad.”

There can be no greater object of true education than to teach and to preserve a sense of proportion, and it seems to me that the great advantage you have here over what I may call the definitely propagandist schools is that you have every opportunity of learning to exercise a trained sense of proportion, because the teachers here are chosen in exactly the same way as the teachers are chosen in the free and open universities. They are chosen because they are masters of their subjects. They are chosen not to give propaganda; they are chosen to speak the truth, and those who are responsible for the conduct of this college know that it is only by giving students the opportunity of exercising to the full the ability that is in them that they will be able to choose the truth honestly and freely, and will exercise their minds to the solution of the problems to which they have to devote themselves, without bias and without preconceived

notions. They will clear their minds of cant, and try to see things as they are.

We all of us want understanding—understanding of ourselves and understanding of our brothers and sisters—and that true understanding is the salt that savours the whole life of the community. It was never more needed than it is to-day, and those who understand will realize that there is no greater need in the world, abroad and at home, than peace, peace from the warfare of arms and peace of spirit. Those are the things I intend to fight for during the time that I am Prime Minister, whether that time be long or short, and it is with that object—the object of peace above and before all things—that I am endeavouring to-day to deal with the situation in Europe.

This is not the place to talk about foreign politics. The Imperial Conference meets next week, and it must be that at one of their early meetings the whole question of the present situation in Europe and in the world must be set forth and debated. I would only say here these few words. When this Government came into office, now some ten or eleven months ago, there was an atmosphere of restraint, almost of distrust, between France and ourselves; and I have no doubt that if Mr. Bonar Law had been spared to us as Prime Minister a little longer, he, with his knowledge, with his instinct, with his transparent honesty, would have dissipated that atmosphere once and for all. But he left us before that task was accomplished, and it was my good fortune in an interview which I had last week with the President of the Council in Paris to help, as I believe, to restore that atmosphere of confidence which had for some time been lost. No more and no less. But I think there is now, both in Paris and in London, a recog-

niton of the importance of the Entente—in this way, that without it a European settlement is far more difficult. Indeed, the events of the last two or three weeks have proved that, to those who have eyes to see, the best hope of settlement lies in intimate relationship between France and this country, and if anything occurred that might keep our two countries apart, then I fear it would make the problems which we have to face incomparably more difficult than they are to-day.

You have been extraordinarily kind to me in the reception you have given me here, a reception which touched my heart, and I just want to tell you before I sit down what a close sympathy I have with you in the work you are doing here. I am a sort of half-educated fellow myself. I worked fairly well at school. I did nothing at the University. I have been trying hard ever since to try to catch it up. You have come here to try to catch it up. I wish you all success and happiness in that task. There is no joy in this world like learning. The great joy of life is that it is a task which is never done. Go on learning all your life. I am learning now, and I mean to go on learning if I live to be a hundred. There is nothing I look forward to so much when I am out of office as to start learning again in real earnest. Until that day comes I am afraid I shall have to leave the learning to you, but I do wish you the best of luck in this high task you have undertaken. Do not let yourselves be dispirited when you get into the world again, but hold fast to what you believe to be true and what you believe to be right wherever it leads you, and whatever difficulties you may encounter. Whatever troubles you may have you will, at all events, always have the comfort of a conscience which will tell you that you have tried to act up to the highest lights

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that are in you, and you will feel that you are playing your part in helping to bring your country, your fellow-men and women, through one of the most difficult times that she has ever had to face in her history, and that you are laying, or trying to lay, the foundations of a happier, healthier and saner life for those with us now and for those who will come after us.

Earl Baldwin

great book is the force of life-blond of a
man's spirit — Milton
... can be made into

XIII

MENTAL STOCKTAKING

GREAT books do not spring from something accidental in the great men who wrote them. They are the effluence of their very core, the expression of the life itself of the authors. And literature cannot be said to have served its true purpose until it has been translated into the actual life of him who reads. It does not succeed until it becomes the vehicle of the vital. Progress is the gradual result of the unending battle between human reason and human instinct, in which the former slowly but surely wins. The most powerful engine in this battle is literature. It is the vast reservoir of true ideas and high emotions—and life is constituted of ideas and emotions. In a world deprived of literature, the intellectual and emotional activity of all but a few exceptionally gifted men would quickly sink and retract to a narrow circle. The broad, the noble, the generous would tend to disappear for want of accessible storage. And life would be correspondingly degraded, because the fallacious idea and the petty emotion would never feel the upward pull of the ideas and emotions of genius. Only by conceiving a society without literature can it be clearly realised that the function of literature is to raise the plain towards the top level of the peaks. Literature exists so that where one man has lived finely ten thousand may afterwards live finely. It is a means of life ; it concerns the living essence.

Of course, literature has a minor function, that of passing the time in an agreeable and harmless fashion, by giving momentary faint pleasure. Vast multitudes of people (among whom may be numbered not a few habitual readers) utilise only this minor function of literature; by implication

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they class it with golf, bridge, or soporifics. Literary genius, however, had no intention of competing with these devices for fleeting the empty hours: and all such use of literature may be left out of account.

You, O serious student of many volumes, believe that you have a sincere passion for reading. You hold literature in honour, and your last wish would be to debase it to a paltry end. You are not of those who read because the clock has just struck nine and one can't go to bed till eleven. You are animated by a real desire to get out of literature all that literature will give. And in that aim you keep on reading, year after year, and the grey hairs come. But amid all this steady tapping of the reservoir, do you ever take stock of what you have acquired? Do you ever pause to make a valuation, in terms of your own life, of that which you are daily absorbing, or imagine you are absorbing? Do you ever satisfy yourself by proof that you are absorbing anything at all, that the living waters, instead of vitalising you, are not running off you as though you were a duck in a storm? Because, if you omit this mere business precaution, it may well be that you, too, without knowing it, are little by little joining the triflers who read only because eternity is so long. It may well be that even your alleged sacred passion is, after all, simply a sort of drug-habit. The suggestion disturbs and worries you. You dismiss it impatiently; but it returns.

How (you ask, unwillingly) can a man perform a mental stocktaking? How can he put a value on what he gets from books? How can he effectively test, in cold blood, whether he is receiving from literature all that literature has to give him?

The test is not so vague, nor so difficult, as might appear.

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- we are the waters of wisdom and life - flowing eternally, and we must use them for vitalising life. — Uses of Lit.

the object of life is to create an
unbounded stretch of knowledge.

ARNOLD BENNETT

If a man is not thrilled by intimate contact with nature :
with the sun, with the earth, which is his origin and the
arouser of his acutest emotions—his reading is barren.

If he is not troubled by the sight of beauty in many
forms—

If he is devoid of curiosity concerning his fellow-men
and his fellow-animals—

If he does not have glimpses of the unity of all things
in an orderly progress—

If he is chronically "querulous, dejected, and envious" —

If he is pessimistic—

If he is of those who talk about "this age of shams,"
"this age without ideals," "this hysterical age," and this
heaven-knows-what-age—

Then that man, though he reads undisputed classics for
twenty hours a day, though he has a memory of steel,
though he rivals Porson in scholarship and Sainte Beuve
in judgment, is not receiving from literature what literature
has to give. Indeed, he is chiefly wasting his time. Unless
he can read differently, it were better for him if he sold all
his books, gave to the poor, and played croquet. He fails
because he has not assimilated into his existence the vital
essences which genius put into the books that have merely
passed before his eyes ; because genius has offered him
faith, courage, vision, noble passion, curiosity, love, a
thirst for beauty, and he has not taken the gift ; because
genius has offered him the chance of living fully, and he
is only half alive, for it is only in the stress of fine ideas
and emotions that a man may be truly said to live. This
is not a moral invention, but a simple fact, which will be
attested by all who know what that stress is.

What ! You talk learnedly about Shakespeare's sonnets!

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Have you heard Shakespeare's terrific shout :

Full many a glorious morning have I seen
Flatter the mountain-tops with sovereign eye,
Kissing with golden face the meadows green,
Gilding pale streams with heavenly alchemy.

And yet, can you see the sun over the viaduct at Loughborough Junction of a morning, and catch its rays in the Thames off Dewar's whisky monument, and not shake with the joy of life? If so, you and Shakespeare are not yet in communication. What! You pride yourself on your beautiful edition of Casaubon's translation of *Marcus Aurelius*, and you savour the cadences of the famous :

This day I shall have to do with an idle, curious man, with an unthankful man, a railer, a crafty, false, or an envious man. All these ill qualities have happened unto him, through ignorance of that which is truly good and truly bad. But I that understand the nature of that which is good, that it only is to be desired, and of that which is bad, that it only is truly odious and shameful : who know, moreover, that this transgressor, whosoever he be, is my kinsman, not by the same blood and seed, but by participation of the same reason and of the same divine particle—how can I be hurt? . . .

And with these cadences in your ears you go and quarrel with a cabman!

You would be ashamed of your literary self to be caught in ignorance of Whitman, who wrote :

Now understand me well—it is provided in the essence of things that from any fruition of success, no matter what, shall come forth something to make a greater struggle necessary.

And yet, having achieved a motor-car, you lose your temper when it breaks down half-way up a hill!

You know your Wordsworth, who has been trying to teach you about :

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real essence of life
one who has peace of mind
The Upholder of the tranquil soul
That tolerates the indignities of Time *up and down of*
And, from the centre of Eternity *1.00.*
All finite motions over-ruling, lives
In glory immutable. *unchangeable.*

unhappy
But you are capable of being seriously unhappy when
your suburban train selects a tunnel for its repose!

with interest
And the A. V. of the Bible, which you now read, not
as your forefathers read it, but with an æsthetic delight,
especially in the Apocrypha! You remember:

Prophets and
Whatsoever is brought upon thee, take cheerfully, and be patient
when thou art changed to a low estate. For gold is tried in the fire
and acceptable men in the furnace of adversity.

in a modern
wasational
And yet you are ready to lie down and die because a
woman has scorned you! Go to!

style
You think some of my instances approach the ludicrous?
They do. They are meant to do so. But they are no more
ludicrous than life itself. And they illustrate in the most
workaday fashion how you can test whether your literature
fulfils its function of informing and transforming your
existence. *of good culture and profound thought.*

in a modern
wasational
I say that if daily events and scenes do not constantly
recall and utilise the ideas and emotions contained in the
books which you have read or are reading; if the memory
of these books does not quicken the perception of beauty,
wherever you happen to be, does not help you to correlate
the particular trifle with the universal, does not smooth out
irritation and give dignity to sorrow—then you are, con-
sciously or not, unworthy of your high vocation as a book-
man. You may say that I am preaching a sermon. The
fact is, I am. My mood is a severely moral mood. For
when I reflect upon the difference between what books have

The study of the world, the study of the world, the study of the world
and more thinking the world is a great

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to offer and what even relatively earnest readers take the trouble to accept from them, I am appalled (or should be appalled, did I not know that the world is moving) by the sheer inefficiency, the bland, complacent failure of the earnest reader. I am like yourself, the spectacle of inefficiency rouses my holy ire.

Before you begin upon another masterpiece, set out in a row the masterpieces which you are proud of having read during the past year. Take the first on the list, that book which you perused in all the zeal of your New Year resolutions for systematic study. Examine the compartments of your mind. Search for the ideas and emotions which you have garnered from that book. Think, and recollect when last something from that book recurred to your memory apropos of your own daily commerce with humanity. Is it history—when did it throw a light for you on modern politics? Is it science—when did it show you order in apparent disorder, and help you to put two and two together into an inseparable four? Is it ethics—when did it influence your conduct in a twopenny-halfpenny affair between man and man? Is it a novel—when did it help you to "understand all and forgive all"? Is it poetry—when was it a magnifying glass to disclose beauty to you, or a fire to warm your cooling faith? If you can answer these questions satisfactorily, your stocktaking as regards the fruit of your traffic with that book may be reckoned satisfactory. If you cannot answer them satisfactorily, then either you chose the book badly or your impression that you *read* it is a mistaken one.

When the result of this stocktaking forces you to the conclusion that your riches are not so vast as you thought them to be, it is necessary to look about for the causes of the misfortune. The causes may be several. You may

(1) have been reading worthless books. This, however, I should say at once, is extremely unlikely. Habitual and confirmed readers, unless they happen to be reviewers, seldom read worthless books. In the first place, they are so busy with books of proved value that they have only a small margin of leisure left for very modern works, and generally, before they can catch up with the age, Time or the critic has definitely threshed for them the wheat from the chaff. No! Mediocrity has not much chance of hoodwinking the serious student. *average student*

It is less improbable that the serious student has been choosing his books badly. He may do this in two ways—absolutely and relatively. Every reader of long standing has been through the singular experience of suddenly *seeing* a book with which his eyes have been familiar for years. He reads a book with a reputation and thinks: "Yes, this is a good book. This book gives me pleasure." And then after an interval, perhaps after half a lifetime, something mysterious happens to his mental sight. He picks up the book again, and sees a new and profound significance in every sentence, and he says: "I was perfectly blind to this book before." Yet he is no cleverer than he used to be. Only something has happened to him. Let a gold watch be discovered by a supposititious man who has never heard of watches. He has a sense of beauty. He admires the watch, and takes pleasure in it. He says: "This is a beautiful piece of bric-a-brac; I fully appreciate this delightful trinket." Then imagine his feelings when someone comes along with the key; imagine the light flooding his brain. Similar incidents occur in the eventful life of the constant reader. He has no key, and never suspects that there exists such a thing as a key. That is what I call a choice absolutely bad.

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The choice is relatively bad when, spreading over a number of books, it pursues no order, and thus results in a muddle of faint impressions each blurring the rest. Books must be allowed to help one another; they must be skilfully called in to each other's aid. And that this may be accomplished some guiding principle is necessary. "And what," you demand, "should that guiding principle be?" How do I know? Nobody, fortunately, can make your principles for you. You have to make them for yourself. But I will venture upon this general observation: that in the mental world what counts is not numbers but co-ordination. As regards facts and ideas, the great mistake made by the average well-intentioned reader is that he is content with the names of things instead of occupying himself with the causes of things. He seeks answers to the question What? instead of to the question Why? He studies history, and never guesses that all history is caused by the facts of geography. He is a botanical expert, and can take you to where the *Sibthorpia europæa* grows, and never troubles to wonder what the earth would be without its cloak of plants. He wanders forth on starlit evenings and will name you with unction all the constellations from Andromeda to the Scorpion; but if you ask him why Venus can never be seen at midnight, he will tell you that he has not bothered with the scientific details. He has not learned that names are nothing, and the satisfaction of the lust of the eye a trifle compared to the imaginative vision of which scientific "details" are the indispensable basis.

Most reading, I am convinced, is ^{unwise} unphilosophical; that is to say, it lacks the element which more than anything else quickens the poetry of life. Unless and until a man has formed a scheme of knowledge, be it a mere skeleton, his reading must necessarily be unphilosophical. He must

have attained to some notion of the inter-relations of the various branches of knowledge before he can properly comprehend the branch in which he specialises. If he has not drawn an outline map upon which he can fill in whatever knowledge comes to him, as it comes, and on which he can trace the affinity of every part with every other part, he is assuredly frittering away a large percentage of his efforts. There are certain philosophical works which, once they are mastered, seem to have performed an operation for cataract, so that he who was blind, having read them, henceforward sees cause and effect working in and out everywhere. To use another figure, they leave stamped on the brain a chart of the entire province of knowledge.

Such a work is Spencer's *First Principles*. I know that it is nearly useless to advise people to read *First Principles*. They are intimidated by the sound of it; and it costs as much as a dress-circle seat at the theatre. But if they would, what brilliant stocktakings there might be in a few years! Why, if they would only read such detached essays as that on "Manners and Fashion," or "The Genesis of Science" (in a sixpenny volume of Spencer's *Essays*, published by Watts and Co.), the magic illumination, the necessary power of "synthetising" things, might be vouchsafed to them. In any case, the lack of some such disciplinary, co-ordinating measure will amply explain many disastrous stocktakings. The manner in which one single ray of light, one single precious hint, will clarify and energise the whole mental life of him who receives it, is among the most wonderful and heavenly of intellectual phenomena. Some men search for that light and never find it. But most men never search for it.

The superlative cause of disastrous stocktakings remains, and it is much more simple than the one with which I have

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just dealt. It consists in the absence of meditation. People read, and read, and read, blandly unconscious of their effrontery in assuming that they can assimilate without any further effort the vital essence which the author has breathed into them. They cannot. And the proof that they do not is shown all the time in their lives. I say that if a man does not spend at least as much time in actively and definitely thinking about what he has read as he has spent in reading, he is simply insulting his author. If he does not submit himself to intellectual and emotional fatigue in classifying the communicated ideas, and in emphasising on his spirit the imprint of the communicated emotions—then reading with him is a pleasant pastime and nothing else. This is a distressing fact. But it is a fact. It is distressing, for the reason that meditation is not a popular exercise. If a friend asks you what you did last night, you may answer, "I was reading," and he will be impressed and you will be proud. But if you answer, "I was meditating," he will have a tendency to smile and you will have a tendency to blush. I know this. I feel it myself. (I cannot offer any explanation.) But it does not shake my conviction that the absence of meditation is the main origin of disappointing stocktakings.

Arnold Bennett.

XIV

CHARLES DICKENS

1812—1870

IN considering Dickens as a Victorian, perhaps the first necessity is considering him as a pre-Victorian. It is not so much a matter of dates as of derivations; it must be remembered, to begin with that he is much less completely inside the period, much less covered at both ends by the conventions of the period, than many great men whom some would call more original, like Ruskin or Meredith or Browning. On this side, indeed, Dickens is outside the Victorian enclosure, not so much because he was original as because he was traditional. Though labelled Radical, where others were labelled Tory, he carries on a rank, rowdy, jolly tradition, of men falling off coaches, before the sons of Science and the Great Exhibition began to travel primly on rails—or grooves. He carries on the Old English legend of the coarse and comic novels of Smollett and Fielding; and none the less because, under the gradual pressure of Victorianism, his work is still comic but no longer coarse. The sort of comicality that commonly went with coarseness is apparent enough, especially at the beginning; while many of the other Victorians seem to have grown up, not merely Victorian—but something that should rather be called Albertian. This is the first and perhaps the frankest phase of Dickens; and but for refinements that really started later than this phase, it might easily have been even more frank. It may or may not be right to call him a caricaturist. But certainly, considered as a caricaturist, he starts straight away out of the world of Gilray and Rowlandson; a world widely different from that of Du Maurier or even Keene. We hardly feel any

such direct heritage of the old comic writers even at the beginning of the other Victorian novelists: because they are more completely Victorian. And before we come to the application of this fact to his fiction, it has some application even to his life. For circumstances started him almost unconsciously with a certain very ancient tradition, which for special reasons had become a very English tradition. It makes an immortal appearance in his first great master-piece of *Pickwick*; but it is connected also with something in his personal position as well as in his literary lineage. It is perhaps the simplest figure in which we can summarize his primary position both in life and letters. I will call it for convenience the great tradition of The Comic Servant. And though in special ways it had been softened by being Christian and emphasized by being English, it is a very venerable tradition, which works back to the position in antiquity of The Comic Slave.

To explain this, we may briefly allude to his life, though there is no space for his biography. He was born in Portsea, a part of Portsmouth, in 1812, but was soon removed to Chatham, around which neighbourhood his early life largely revolved. His father was an impecunious old party, whose occupation was often shadowy and what the hasty will describe as shady. But he was the model of Micawber, and therefore must have had in him something great and good. He and his son later went to London, where they both became parliamentary reporters; but the son soon turned from reporting politics to reporting life. As a journalist he wrote under the name of "Boz," and certain sketches of his attracted attention; a friend and patron named Hogarth had a family of daughters, among whom he found first a wife and afterwards a friend; but

his first great opportunity came with the offer to write a story round Seymour's sketches of the pranks of the Nimrod Club, which he managed to turn into the more famous Pickwick Club. The book was hugely popular, and ever afterwards he was busy, successful, laborious, inventive, excited, and exhausted until he died. *Oliver Twist*, which stands somewhat alone, was followed by a serial scheme of stories within a story called *Master Humphrey's Clock*, in which *Barnaby Rudge* and *The Old Curiosity Shop* both appeared. Later, at regular intervals, came *Nicholas Nickleby*, *Martin Chuzzlewit* and *Dombey and Son*; and with the latter we reach and recognize a change in his mood and method: the frank farce begins to fade away, and the more subtle, sober, and realistic Dickens of later years develops. He reaches his most sincere moment in the semi-autobiographical *David Copperfield*; his most earnest social philosophy in *Hard Times*, with something of the same graver reforming spirit in *Bleak House*; and his most restrained and delicate artistic success in *Great Expectations*. *Little Dorrit* was something of an interlude; and then he gathered up into his last complete book, *Our Mutual Friend* all his growing knowledge of the realities of society, of the growth of plutocracy, and the peril now threatening the national tradition. His furious industry, combined with yet more devastating tours in America, to say nothing of the private tragedy that separated him from his wife, gave something gloomy and feverish to his end; and he died in 1870, leaving unsolved other mysteries besides *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*.

It is rather symbolic that he died in that year of Prussian victory, which was the eclipse of Liberty throughout the world. For he had grown up with the

growing Liberalism of England, and is perhaps the one great Englishman who consciously devoted himself to democracy as a feeling as well as a theory. He stands for all the hearty humanitarianism of that age at its best; and yet there is a deeper and older element in him, which I have put first because it came first. I mean, what I have already called the tradition of *The Comic Servant*.

I mean, that if we call Dickens democratic, we must qualify it by saying that he is the derisive democrat rather than the dignified democrat. If he looks down on worldly rank, it is not from the severe status of the citizen of antiquity; it is not even from the solid status of the peasant in any peasantry. It is rather with that inverted and comic contempt which looks down when it looks up. It derives, not so much from any levelling dogma that Jack is as good as his master, in the sense that he should have no master; it derives rather from the old joke, found in many an old legend, that Jack is better than his master; that in the last scene the last are first and the first last. We could hardly summon the solemnity to say that Samuel Pickwick and Samuel Weller are two equal citizens; if only because in some ways the servant is the superior. But the superiority is the superiority of a comic servant, not of a master or even a peasant proprietor; superiority in wit and satire and cunning, but not superiority in status or seriousness or dignity. Now, despite the growth of more grave and ideal democratic views, this did long remain the real attitude of the real Dickens. He was, first of all, the poorer man making fun of the richer; but instinctively using fun as his weapon, and not minding if in the process he seems merely the funny man. This was complicated afterwards, as will be noted later, by many less natural ambitions touching

rhetoric and sentiment. But when Dickens is most like himself, he is most like Sam Weller, and least like Wat Tyler or William Tell. He is more really concerned to show that the tyrant is undignified than that the slave is dignified.

The point is that the comic Dickens existed before the tragic or melodramatic ; the comic was older than the tragic ; the comic was deeper than the tragic. It was partly because there was already a tradition of popular joviality rather than popular justice ; of riot rather than revolt. It was partly because Dickens as an individual had lived for a long time amid this laughter of the populace, before he began to think more seriously of that social ideal ; which is not merely the populace, but rather the people. Just as Sam Weller had run wild as a sort of guttersnipe, before he became a gentleman's servant and something of a philosopher, so Dickens had been one of the old English crowd, from which a nameless voice cries, "Three cheers for the Mayor ; and may he never desert the nail and sarspan business as 'e made 'is money by," long before he had ever dreamed of seeing the tragic vision of a French crowd, as in *The Tale of Two Cities*, through the visionary eyes of Carlyle. That is the real comparison between Dickens the humorist, and Dickens the sentimentalist, the sociologist, the realist, the reformer, and all the many aspects that have been unfavourably or favourably compared with it. Not that his social criticism was bad, not even that his sentimentalism was always necessarily bad ; but that his humour was the elder brother, more hardy, more mature, more expert and experienced, more genuine and more national and historic. For the English populace has lived on laughter—its substitute for religion, for property, and sometimes even for food.

We may say that in this matter there is a curious contrast to Scott. We may also say that in this matter

Scott was really Scottish, and therefore the reverse of English. For the Scots, having a real religion of the people, have had a real dignity in the democracy. Nothing is more notable than this curious contradiction: that while Dickens called himself a Radical and really was a Democrat, and Scott called himself a Tory and really rejoiced in some qualities of the older aristocrat, Scott had a far nobler sense than Dickens of the natural human dignity of the poor. Small farmers or fishermen in Scott do not have to become comic servants in order to score off their masters; do not have to become Court fools in order to criticise the Court. They can be eloquent in plain words: they can be eloquent in poor man's speech; they can be eloquent in broad Scots. Nobody doubts the sincerity of Dickens or the justification of Peggotty: but they could not speak over the ruined hearth with the tongue of Meg Merrilees over the gipsy fires; a speech that almost rises into song. Nationality is not a matter of praise or blame, for by its very nature a nation gives a colour to things both good and evil; but it is important to realize that Dickens could no more have imagined Meg Merrilees than Scott could have invented Mrs. Wilfer.

Oddly enough Dickens could only write good rhetoric when he meant it for bad rhetoric. When he himself seriously meant it for good rhetoric, it was generally bad. So completely was the comic spirit his spirit, almost in the sense of his soul, that anything he wrote with expansion and exaggeration was for him a liberation of the soul, and took swelling contours of the comic, which really have their own beauty and even their own harmony. But when he was only making his serious characters dramatic, he often only made them melodramatic. When he was only stuffing the gaps of the mere story with serious matter, he was not

enjoying himself so much : and the stuffing was often poor stuff. His fools could talk poetry, while his knaves could only talk sentiment. Therefore, strange as it may seem, the one or two occasions on which Dickens may actually be said to be an English stylist, are those in which he is a satirist of what he considers a pompous and preposterous style. About as good a piece of English as he ever wrote in his life is Mr. Serjeant Buzfuz's speech, which is really an uncommonly good speech. We can see the difference at once, when we compare it with the really pompous and preposterous speeches he was putting, almost at the same time, into the mouths of his serious villains. For instance, *Nicholas Nickleby* is an early work ; but *Pickwick* is even earlier. But the raving of Ralph Nickleby is not even good as raving ; while the ranting of Serjeant Buzfuz is very good as ranting ; nay, is classical and almost rational as ranting. Few, I imagine, who have had business interviews with a money-lender, or even a stingy uncle, have ever heard him conclude the conversation with the words, "My curse my bitter curse upon you, boy !" ; or formed a high opinion of his literary style if he did. But then Dickens was not enjoying himself in writing about Ralph ; and he was enjoying himself in writing about Buzfuz. Therefore, as I say, he so heartily enters into the real spirit of the old forensic eloquence, and so fills it with his own ecstasy of emphasis, that he really writes a piece of good style worthy of a great stylist. After describing darkly how "a being, erect upon two legs and bearing all the outward semblance of a man and not of a monster," entered Mrs. Bardell's lodging-house, he has the art and restraint to close the passage with simplicity and severity. "This man was Pickwick ; Pickwick the defendant." Then, by a true stylistic inspiration, he starts afresh, as with a new

paragraph : "Of this man Pickwick I will say little. The subject presents but few attractions; and I, gentlemen, am not the man, nor are you, gentlemen, the men, to delight in the contemplation of revolting heartlessness and systematic villainy." Which is, quite seriously, a rattling good piece of English rhetoric ; a thousand times better than anything Dickens could have written when he wanted to be serious.

It would be an exaggeration to say that this is because Dickens was not serious about being serious. But it is true to say that his whole soul was seldom in anything about which he was wholly serious. He was a man with much of the actor in him ; he was, in fact, an admirable amateur actor ; the real, sound, old-fashioned sort of actor, who was proud of versatility and the taking of varied parts. When he took the part of a rhetorician or a sentimentalist or a social idealist, he was sincere as an actor is sincere ; that is, as any other artist is sincere. He had something to say and he said it ; not always perfectly, but often very well. But when he was describing something funny, he was himself. He was not acting but enjoying ; he was almost the audience rather than the artist. There was something gigantic, as of the joy of a whole crowd, in his enjoyment. He was essentially the man who laughs at his own jokes, and his own jokes inspired him like wine to wilder and wilder creation ; but always to the creation of beauty in his own department of the far-fetched and the fantastic. What is more to the purpose here, they could inspire him even in the department of the forensic or the classic. When he was giving us Buzfuz at his funniest, he could not help giving us Buzfuz at his best. Dickens does not record the speech of Mr. Sergeant Snubbin, the Counsel of Mr. Pickwick, who was equally eminent and doubtless equally

eloquent. But then Snubbin had the misfortune to be on the right side, and especially the reasonable side, and reasonableness would never have inspired such rhetoric. In Dickens it is the man who is entirely in the wrong who invariably says the right thing.

All the genius is in that saying of the right thing; that is, of the exquisitely and ecstatically wrong thing. His fun is a form of poetry; and quite as personal and indefinable as poetry. Like poetry, it is for the moment on one note, and making the most of one notion: like poetry, it leaves us amazed at what can be made out of one notion. That is what the critics mean who say it is not like life; because it is more living than life. It is a magic accelerating growth; so that one seed out of a thousand seeds of fact visibly springs and sprouts into a tree, as in a fairy-tale. Certainly this is not dealing with all the facts; but it is releasing all the potential life in one of them. Dickens saw something, whether in a man's notions or in his nose, which could be developed more than dull life dares to develop it. The Dickens comic character is in that sense real and in that sense unreal. We may call it a caricature; though indeed it is a caricature of Dickens to call him a caricaturist. The very criticism itself has exactly the over-simplification of a caricature. But if anybody thinks that anybody can do it, that it is a vulgar trick of exaggerating anything, that it is not a work of art, that it is not a work of genius—then that critic may be curtly recommended to become a great comic novelist, and create a score of Dickens characters out of the next twenty people he meets. He will soon find that he can no more do it than he can become a great poet merely by admiring the sunset. In this sense we may say that Dickens was really too subtle.

and distinguished; and that is why it was easy to call him obvious and vulgar.

We may here recur to the fact first stated: that Dickens, who was in a family sense almost as new and nameless as a foundling, or at least almost as lonely as an orphan, had in a literary sense something like a pedigree. He called one of his sons Henry Fielding Dickens, and we instantly feel that he had a sort of natural right to make a godfather out of Henry Fielding; more than he had, in that sense, to make one out of a pure Victorian like Alfred Tennyson. But the comic literature was not all great literature, nor its exponents all men like Fielding; and there were two sides to the very broad farce prevailing before the time when the Tennyson refinement finally prevailed. In some ways this crude comic tradition did him harm even then; and in one particular way it does him even greater harm now. It is notable that he took over certain stock stage figures, of the farcical sort, and many modern readers are still repelled by a general impression that the story is stale, before they go on to discover that the story-telling is almost startlingly fresh. For instance, they feel that it is not very funny that Mr. Tupman was a fat man who dressed up as a dandy and a lady-killer. It is not very funny; and for that reason Dickens really tells us very little more about Mr. Tupman. It marks the inspired inconsequence of his method, that the story of *Pickwick* is not chiefly the story of the *Pickwickians*. Dickens started with the stock characters, but he crowded the stage with superb supers who have nothing to do with the play, and who are the making of it. By the end, the story is full of entirely new and original characters, and none more new than Mr. Samuel Pickwick; who has somehow changed from a goggle-eyed

old buffoon to a most mellow and well-mannered old English merchant. Nobody does justice to Dickens the creative artist who has a general prejudiced impression of Dickens the caricaturist. He actually began with a commission to write what were little more than captions for caricatures. The point is that while the caricatures remained stiff or vulgar, the new captions grew more and more inventive and imaginative. The test is not in the situations, but in the treatment of the situations. There must have been many tipsy clerks, in many comic novels, who roystered in their cups in the manner of robbers carousing. But only one of them, whose name was Richard Swiveller, when crying, "Some wine here, ho!" ever carried dramatic versatility so far as to hand the flagon to himself with profound humility and then receive it haughtily. There must have been many jokes about Valentine's Day as vulgar as the valentines; but only in the Weller family was there that remarkable debate on diction, which decided whether "circumscribed" or "circumvented" is a more tender word. Many allusions less than delicate were made to Mrs. Gamp's profession, but only one gave us a flashing glimpse of that distracted husband, and the invalid who was told "to ease 'er mind, 'is 'owls was organs."

Nevertheless, Dickens did gain something essential to his greatness from that old tradition of England, and even from that relatively old tradition of revolution. I know not what it should be called; if I had to invent a name for it I should call it *The Great Gusto*; something whole-hearted and precipitate about the mirth and the anger of that age, when there were mobs and no ballot-boxes. When all is allowed for, the many noble names that are native to the Victorian time as such, and their several forms of

CHARLES DICKENS

sincerity or self-direction, it is true that the great force, or even the great violence of Dickens flows through them all, like an ancestral river coming from older places and more historic hills. He is all the more traditional because he is ignorant. He has that vast, silent, incessant traditionalism that we call the ignorance of the populace. And it is right to say that when more sophisticated Victorians set up fads like fences, and established new forms of narrowness, that flood of popular feeling, that was a single man, burst through them and swept on. He was a Radical, but he would not be a Manchester Radical, to please Mr. Gradgrind. He was a humanitarian, but he would not be a platform pacifist, to please Mr. Honeythunder. He was vaguely averse to ritual religion; but he would not abolish Christmas, to please Mr. Scrooge. He was ignorant of religious history, and yet his religion was historic. For he was the People, that is heard so rarely in England; and, if it had been heard more often, would not have suffered its feasts to be destroyed.

G. K. Chesterton.

XV

THE PLACE OF ENGLISH LITERATURE IN EDUCATION.

(Address delivered on the occasion of the Second Anniversary of the English Literary Association, Fergusson College.)

It is indeed a singular pleasure to be present here on this occasion under the auspices of the English Literary Association. The pleasure is heightened by the fact that my distinguished predecessor on this platform was the Right Hon'ble Srinivasa Sastri, who spoke to you about elocution with an authority which is unique. I have been looking forward to this opportunity for several days, especially owing to the insistence of a young friend who is a member of your Association. I am very glad to be present here this morning in your midst. You must not imagine that the subject is my own selection. It is a mandate from your President. Last evening when he met me at my residence, he added just one important word to the title of the subject, which he forgot to mention to you. He described it as "The Place of *English* Literature" etc., etc. not of literature in general like, for instance, Marathi. It would be, on my part, a bold venture to descant here upon Marathi literature before distinguished scholars, three of whom I see in front of me to-day. I have no qualifications at all to speak on any other branch of literature, except perhaps a little on Sanskrit.

The subject, therefore, has been selected by your eminent President, to whose brilliant speech I listened half in embarrassment and half in admiration. The subject is

THE PLACE OF ENGLISH LITERATURE

"The Place of the Study of English Literature in the Scheme of our Education."

I see a distinguished mathematician in the chair this morning, and I shall therefore be careful not to set up any conflict between Science and Mathematics on the one hand and English Literature on the other. I can with perfect truth say that, in a rightly conceived scheme of literary studies, there ought to be no such conflict at all. There is a tendency in some quarters to regard English Literature as being merely a vehicle of expression through the English language—a kind of facile way by which you convey your thoughts through the medium of that language. In my opinion, that is too narrow a view of English literature. As I view it, the study of English literature is something greater than a mere medium of expression, the perfection of your vocabulary, or the sharpening of your verbal weapons. It is even greater than the power of facile, elegant or refined expression. It has a far higher place in our scheme of education, though in the hurry of passing examinations and securing honours, we are apt to forget it. I am not here referring to the accident that it happens to be the literature of the people with whom our lot has been cast by Providence, but I have in mind what Bacon said about the influence of literary studies, on the softening and humanising of our character. I do not know whether you study Bacon in your colleges now. We used to devote considerable attention to that admirable writer. His conception of literary studies was that they should help to make our character softer, nobler and more attuned to the necessities—the duties and obligations—of human life. A literary man, truly so-called, stands by himself, at peace with his fellows, cheerfully bearing his lot in life, able to understand the inner significance of the complexities under

literature humanises a man's mind and soul.

Literature is the mirror which
presents the ideal of a nation.

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which the world groans, and willing to help and sympathise with all noble efforts to relieve human sorrow. It is vital that, in studying English literature, you should not lose sight of this higher aspect of such studies.

I would also ask you to bear in mind another aspect of the question, and equally important with the one just mentioned, that English literature is the best avenue leading to a proper understanding of the civilisation and the culture of the people with whom our lot has been cast. I am not referring here to the British as the governing race in India. English literature has, in my view, a peculiar significance, especially for the young student, as being a short cut to the understanding of the human element in the genius and character of a people who, especially in India and, at official or social distance, are apt to appear insufferably self-centred and arrogant.

I suppose it is now generally admitted that the master key which unlocks the secret of a people's soul is their literature. This is so, not with English literature alone, but with any literature in the world, which any civilized race has left behind. Take any literature you like. If you want to study the soul of a people, what they yearned for, their ideals and ambitions, their achievements in human history, their contribution to the noblest sentiments of humanity, the shortest way is to know them through their best authors. We are coming to recognise this more and more. The character of a people in any particular age reflects itself most faithfully in the literature of that period. The literary man writes without the expedient reserve of the historian. He writes for an ever-increasing circle of readers and puts his teachings in the form of expressions and sentiments which find an echo in the heart

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of his age. English literature, therefore, is the soul of the British people as reflected in the different periods of their literary history, and as such it ought to engage your attention. To know a people through their literature is to know them at their best. I want you to take with you, when you leave your college, as students of literature, some true and permanent impressions about the people whose literature you have studied, which will stand you in good stead in your later career, wherever you may elect to seek it.

The first requisite which you will need for the study of English literature from this point of view is sympathy and appreciation for the culture and civilization of the people whose literature you read. This is inevitable, and unless you have such sympathy and good will, you will not be able to derive the best advantage from your studies. I own that, under the political conditions at present prevailing in India, it is rather difficult to adopt this view-point towards the British as a race. I know that. We know them too much as self-centred and haughty officials. Few of us get the chance of knowing the Britisher as an ordinary human being. The race complex on both sides prevents contact on the common plane of humanity. Some of the specimens you see in your surroundings make it difficult to conceive any good will or sympathy for the British people and their civilization. But you have got to transcend this feeling with some difficulty. You have got to look beyond. Supposing I have very ugly people sitting now in the front row before me, that cannot give me a true picture of the whole audience behind, sitting at a distance. I have therefore to look beyond my immediate surroundings. I have to look ahead. I know that, particularly in Poona, personal contact with the

Britisher is comparatively uncommon. That is the students' misfortune, but failing that contact, and in order to make amends for its want, you have to know the race through its best specimens, viz., the literary men. You have to set your eyes on Morley and Wordsworth as the great humanists of that race. Antipathy for a people, contempt for their history and civilization, destroys all incentive to and also all capacity for a study of their literature. Take, for instance, the history of the British in India. They have been here for 150 years. Every day they meet Indians, mostly in a subordinate capacity. Few of them conceive any respect or admiration for the Indian people, with the result that, barring a few eminent exceptions, they feel no fascination to study Indian literature. How many of them have even a cursory acquaintance with any Indian language? Perhaps one in a thousand. How few of them study any branch of Indian literature with understanding and insight? Perhaps one in ten thousand; and how few of them have been permanently benefited by such study? Perhaps one in a million. What is all that due to? It arises from the political conditions of the country, which stamp Indian literature as the handiwork of an inferior people.

So long as it is impossible for the Britisher to feel respect and sympathy for the Indian people and their civilization, this state of things will continue. It is strange that an intelligent race like the British, after 150 years of intimate contact with India, should have produced so few literary men who find themselves at home with literary productions in Indian languages. Here varied and extensive fields of literature are lying in front of them: Gujarati, Marathi and Hindi languages, the large and inexhaustible store of Sanskrit literature, and yet this intelligent race,

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after a century and a half of intimate contact, has remained practically unaffected by the literary environment of India.

Take, on the other hand, the German people. I am illustrating my point. Why is it that they study and understand Indian literature? Because the element of political superiority, disrespect and arrogance is absent. I know some of them have come to this country for knowing in flesh and blood the people whose literature they want to read. In your own city I have seen a scholar studying with avidity the old Mimamsa literature of India. I asked him: "Why have you taken the trouble to come to this country? Surely these books were available in your country?" He gave me a pertinent reply. He said: "I wanted to study close at hand the people whose literature I was reading and to confirm by contact the affection I felt for their authors. I know them through their literature and I want to know them through their eyes, the windows of their soul." This exemplifies the point of my comment. The British and the Germans are both gifted people, studious and energetic, and yet you see the difference between them, mainly attributable to the attitude of each towards the people whose literature they wish to study. Sympathy and understanding are therefore the touchstones, and without their aid it is difficult to understand the literary achievements of a people.

Another important requisite for the study of Literature with true benefit to the student is to know the history of the age whose literature you read. May I say one thing more? Do not regard English literature as only a gift of expression; that is a small point, though largely exaggerated in India. It is a rare experience in India to hear an Indian speak English well. The very novelty of

it is pleasant and secures praise. It is like a child beginning to speak. We forgive faults of expression, syntax and diction. The child speaks, and that is enough. You must therefore not attach too much importance to this. A gifted speaker, of course, like Mr. Sastri is a rare phenomenon, but it is one that cannot be reproduced by mere imitative studies.

I want you therefore to study English literature historically. I will illustrate what I mean. If you want to read, for instance, the poems of Dryden, you will find in some of his big works, like, for instance, "Annus Mirabilis," fulsome flattery of the King. I am glad that, in a country like India where this art is only too well known and sedulously practised, the study of these poems has now been discontinued. Such encomiums coming from a great poet could only be understood in their historical perspective, viz., by a study of the times in which the poem was written. We have to go to the whole background of that poem and of its author. So also in Byron; there are large portions of his writings, so varied and dissimilar in character that they can only be understood on an intimate knowledge of the regions through which his muse flowed at the moment. Take, for instance, "Childe Harold." Take his great apostrophe to the Ocean. Each of them has a special colour, which you understand when you go back to their historical environments. Take Tennyson and Wordsworth. It is impossible to understand a great deal of what they wrote, except in the historic background of the English Lakes. Ruskin is intelligible in that environment, as the Museum established in his honour in his native village explains some of the difficult passages in his "Seven Lamps." A literary man both affects and is affected by his surroundings and they

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furnish the key to a proper understanding of his deep-seated sentiments.

These are some of the higher purposes of literary studies, though in an age full of hasty imitation, we are apt to believe that literary perfection could be had by taking a pencil, marking out the passages which strike us as beautiful gems of expression, committing them to memory, and using them in our next speech or essay. That is the superficial way of studying literature. I want you to aim at something more deep and permanent; the grace and refinement of outlook which distinguishes a literary man. All forms of surface imitation are easy. What is more difficult to understand are the permanent elements on which the imitation is grounded, and that is what I am putting before you. Try and get into tune with the mind of the author and associate yours with his sentiments, make them your own by constant study and thought, and learn to feel them spontaneously and with ease, that will humanise your character.

Take another instance, viz., Dean Swift, a great writer, though sometimes vulgar. If you read his unexpurgated writings, some of which will easily come under a few sections of the Indian Penal Code, you will find that they are vulgarly vituperative or realistic and of no permanent human value. But these become more intelligible and more human when you study his environment and the special characteristics of his age. Twelve years ago, when people used to burn foreign goods in India, we passed through a political frenzy similar to the spirit which made Swift cry out: "Burn everything English except coal." If you want to understand Swift, you must go back to the early history of his life. The genesis of his morbidity was there. The man, as his

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infancy made him, stood revealed in his later writings, especially when he wrote in a kind of *déshabillé*. Your Professors must guide you in such studies, revealing the man behind the author. Take another instance nearer our times, Masfield. What makes him so fascinating? How much has Oxford, its movements and environments, to do with it? It is often a great help to try and understand the physical and intellectual surroundings in which the poet writes. It is seldom that his great works are free from the inspiration which his environments provide. Your Professor's teaching ought to be suggestive of these and not only a paraphrasing of the texts. He must try and invest the personality of the poet with a reality, and create a sense of personal touch between the student and the poet he studies.

The two characteristics of English literature, which are well worth your study, are its simplicity and sweetness. It is axiomatic in Sanskrit literature that the bigger the author, the greater is the simplicity of language. It is easy enough to read his poem, but what is not always clear—and that is where the Professor should come to your rescue—is the man and the motive behind the poem. A great poet depicts much of what are perpetual human sentiments. He is not a propagandist in a narrow sense. He is scarcely a theorist. His audience is the entire civilized world, and in proportion as he rises over the bounds and limitations of race, age or clime, does his work gain in excellence and immortality.

Another thing I would like to speak to you about, concerning the popular aspect of this subject, is that you should make your selection very early. English literature is such a vast field of study that it is impossible, within the

short compass of an ordinary life, to cover the whole range of its variety. Nor can you deal with a great writer's life and writings by reading sketches and selections from his works. Such summaries should be and are intended to be only appetizers. They whet your craving, and then turn you to deeper studies. The appetite being whetted, you are not satisfied with predigested food—something dressed up in convenient proportions for weak digestions. This may enable you to have a taste, so as to make a final selection of what you will perpetually feed on. Make your choice very early. Select your particular branch of literature, in which you wish to excel. You may prefer to become a lawyer, for instance, in which case the literary specialisation should begin very early. You may, on the other hand, intend to become a publicist, a writer, or a journalist. You may likewise wish to write, not so much for your own age, as for posterity. These are all distinct avocations, each requiring a whole lifetime's endeavour. Therefore, while at college and by the time you come to leave it, you ought to know definitely in your mind what particular line you wish to adopt as a career. If, for instance, you wish to speak or write as a lawyer, your literary models will be different from those of a journalist or a humanist. You will then feed on the judgments of the great English lawyers of the present age like Haldane, Halsbury or Buckmaster—each in his own way—a master of literary style, with precision, terseness and epigram as chief features. Great lawyers possess a charming facility and clearness of expression, which set complex legal positions in the plain light of commonsense and in the background of human experience. A great lawyer's gifts are lucidity and an ability to seek, for his legal views, a basis in human reason and experience.

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The complexities of legal learning yield to his magic touch, and he dissects them with the rapier of his logic, cutting out all that is ephemeral or artificial and presenting the essentials in the light of principles which seem so well grounded on the ultimate basis of human experience and reason. His inestimable gift is his humour, which sometimes takes the form of withering cynicism. I remember one classic instance of it. At the time of the Jubilee of the Great Queen Victoria, the Judges of the Supreme Court in London met together to vote an address to the Queen. The draft of the address contained a sentence worded as follows :—"Conscious as we are of our imperfections, we have tried to do our duty to the best of our ability etc., etc." A difference of opinion arose about the retention, in the final draft, of the words "conscious as we are of our imperfections." Some were against this self-condemnation, while others favoured it as being in keeping with the traditional modesty of their learning. As the discussion proceeded, some warmth was generated, when an English Judge with a great sense of humour said that he wished to propose an amendment, to which he felt sure his colleagues would all agree. "Let us," he said, "word the sentence as follows :—Conscious as we are of each other's imperfections." I need hardly add that his humour saved the situation.

You may, on the other hand, want to become an author with a graceful literary style. Even then, your specialisation will have to begin early. You may commence with the 16th century authors, but you will have to go till you come to more recent times. When there, you will pause over J. A. Froude and Leslie Stephen, great writers of their times, and Frederic Harrison, another master of style, noted for brevity and antithesis, short sentences, crisp

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and clear, like frost on a sunshiny morning. You will then tarry long over Morley, the author of "Compromise", "Reminiscences" and "Life of Gladstone"—a chaste, effective style, suited equally to the narrative of a historian, the dissertation of a philosopher, and the epigram of political pamphleteering. Few writers of his age possess his gift of simplicity, variety and condensation, and you will need a long and deep study of his works to acquire, in however small a measure, some of the virtues of this gifted writer. Coming nearer, you will study Gardiner with zest and admiration. His balanced diction and acute analysis will be well worth your study.

I will now turn to those who feel inclined to adopt a journalistic career. They won't derive much help from the ancient models, for when these were written, journalism was different from what it is now. Journalism is essentially the creation of the age to which it belongs. It is often born out of the conflicts of the times. Its features therefore are non-permanent and vary from time to time. The student of journalism will therefore have to plunge deep into the vortex of his times and come out with a style suited to his subject.

Coming now to the most fascinating of all professions, namely, that of the public man or the public speaker, to which I suppose the modern young student feels most drawn, you will have to make your choice from a different class of literary gifts. You may derive some benefit from the writing and speeches of the great Advocates of your times, who have been great public speakers. Burke and Brougham are now out of date, but you may derive great benefit from the speeches of great Advocates like Lord Reading. I can recall the first occasion when I heard this great Advocate, now no more, but who for more than half

a century held the blue ribbon of forensic eloquence. His simplicity, grace and incisiveness were unrivalled, as also his memory. I saw him first cross-examining a great financier, who had perpetrated one of the greatest financial frauds of recent times. It was a case involving at times the most intricate dealings concerning sums running into several figures, and yet the ease and rapidity with which Lord Reading (then Sir Rufus Isaacs) cleared up the frauds scattered over a long period were marvellous. "My Lord," he said when he began his cross-examination, "I have to ask a little indulgence, and that is this, that the accused may not be allowed to pause over his replies too long. He is a clever man, and his powers of invention are admirable." The cross-examination continued for several days and was conducted with the aid of hardly a note. The next opportunity I had of hearing his literary eloquence was during the memorable days of the Round Table Conference and the Joint Parliamentary Committee, and it then appeared to me as if the intervening thirty years had not diminished by a jot the fervour and grace of his literary style.

Great changes have taken place in India too. Stylists like Sir Surendranath Bannerji have disappeared, and with them their diction. If you attempt to imitate their literary flavour, it will be difficult to keep your audience interested for long. A great change has come over the quality of literary speeches. Such speeches are becoming increasingly simple, whether you take the addresses in a Court of Law or the orations on a public platform. In those days, people affected the mid-Victorian style. That is mostly gone out now. Here and there you may come across instances which affect your imagination by reason of rarity. Even here you have several models to choose from.

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But whatever style you select for your own adoption, make your selection as early as you can and concentrate on it. Do not vacillate. Make up your mind as to what you think you are good at, and then adhere to your decision. Do not select to-day and reject to-morrow. Find out your aptitude with a little introspection. Do not be carried away by a mere desire to imitate. You cannot grow into the reality of the substance by imitating its shadow. Study your faculties and aptitudes. It is difficult for most of us to be bilingualists, and you have therefore to make a ruthless choice. It takes a whole life-time to know one language perfectly. Do not duplicate the exertion, unless you have exceptional gifts. Having selected your medium of expression, adhere to it for all your literary activities—your speeches, your correspondence, and your literary composition. Very often the diction of one language, its turns of expression and its polite mannerisms are different from those of another language, and this necessitates an exclusive pursuit of the language of your choice. It is not possible for most of us to become **सर्वसाक्षी**; only an Arjuna here and there can achieve the miracle. Don't be content with low achievements within the region of your selection. Aim high and wait not until the top is reached. Nothing so easily kills literary skill as being a jack of all languages.

Simplicity of style, which is so essential in modern times, whether at the Bar or on the public platform, comes from clearness of thinking. Do not imagine that the speaker who excels in speaking simple English does nothing more than that. His ideas are clear, and therefore his words are clear. Clearness of diction arises from clearness of thinking. It may be a question of writing an essay or of writing a poem. Whatever it may be, try and

acquire the habit of thinking clearly. Decide for yourself what you want to say, and then the words will shape themselves into literary moulds suited to your ideas. Your diction will gradually adapt itself to your ideas. A gift of expression cannot be cultivated in isolation from ideas. It is often a good plan, in the earlier stages, to note with deliberation how a great author expresses his ideas. Contrast it with your way of expressing the same thought. Note the difference, and ask yourself why it is so. Where did I go wrong? Why did not this way of expression occur to me? What shall I do to make such expression my own? Mere memorizing won't help you much. Memorizing must be carried deeper than mere learning by rote. Try and understand the mental habits of the author which are the true parent of his style. Acquire these mental habits, and then his literary ways will become easier of imitation. It is an evil habit to imitate a great author by copying his turns of expression and piling them up in sentence after sentence. It may pass as literary skill with the injudicious, but can never secure an enduring place as a literary piece. The style supports the ideas. If these are weighty, they will need a style corresponding in weight and steadiness. In all such matters, the one golden rule is to be natural and avoid ostentatious imitation. The danger of such ostentation is greater in the case of literature which is not in your language sucked with the mother's milk.

It is always a good plan, in the case of a foreign language like English, to lose no opportunity of hearing a good speaker who speaks the language as his native tongue. In Poona you may be lacking in such opportunities, but whenever you get them, you should not allow them to slip by. The great beauty of the English

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language is, as I said before, its sweetness and simplicity. Its sweetness partially arises from the fact that it has a most fascinating system of accents, which does not exist in our language. I want you to note that very carefully. If you want to study and speak the English language well, try and get at the right accent. A word may contain several syllables, but the accent is generally on one syllable only. Mark out that syllable and place the accent there. A word is badly pronounced, if the accent is placed on the wrong syllable, or, what is generally our Indian way, if all the syllables are pronounced with equal emphasis. One badly pronounced word may jar on the ear of the judicious and thereby spoil the effect of an otherwise faultless speech.

The next rule to note in connection with the sweetness of the English language is that the syllables, which follow the accented one, have to be rapidly slurred over. We have no system of accents in Marathi but we are equally critical of vocal errors. Imagine a good speech in Marathi, well conceived, well delivered, but in which ण and न were wrongly inter-changed ! What a bathos !

The sweetness of the English language is closely allied to its simplicity. For acquiring that excellence, one book I would recommend to you, viz. the Bible. It is the same rule as with Marathi or Sanskrit, viz., the higher the author, the simpler is his diction. Take the *Mahabharat* and *Ramayan* in the original Sanskrit, or the *Dasa-Bodha* of Ramdas. Do not abhor the New Testament, because it is the religious book of your rulers. Your President just quoted a little sentence from the Bible, and you noticed how it stood out of the rest of the speech like a little jewel. To this day the Bible holds the field as

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being the simplest composition in the English language, and I cannot do better than recommend its study.

It will be a mistake to allow your political dislike of British rule to come in the way of your studying English literature with appreciation and good will. You will never make any progress, if your attitude is one of hatred, contempt or abhorrence for the culture of the people whose literature you are studying. You have to get over your political dislikes, if any, and concentrate your mind upon the beauty of the literature you read. When in the field of literature, you are not a politician and have no political or social antipathies.

I am thankful to have this opportunity of placing my thoughts before you. I hope you will derive some benefit from them. In making this speech I have drawn on my own experience as a student of English Literature, struggling to understand its genius and aiming at a perfection, which with every advancing year seems more and more unattainable. I would consider myself amply rewarded, if this speech should put hope into some young hearts here in their quest for mastery over the English language.

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The place of English Literature

XVI

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE INTELLECTUALS.*

THE responsibility of the intellectuals of a country is great. If we want to know the opinion of a nation on any important question, we do not consult its men-servants and maid-servants. It is the leaders of a country who represent its public sentiments and aspirations and mould them. The history of the world tells us that slavery and serfdom were not abolished by the collective will of the slaves and the serfs. Democracy, so long as it is what it is, imperfectly educated, throws a great responsibility on the leaders. The average voter even in educated England has no opinion of his own on many questions. He chooses his party by tradition or by his agreement with its central aims in those matters on which he has strong views. On other questions he takes his opinions from his leaders. His conscience is clear when the party is chosen and for the rest the leaders decide and the voters obey. If on the 3rd August 1914 Sir Edward Grey had declared for neutrality, most Liberals would have accepted it as the soundest policy ; as he happened to declare for intervention, that was considered quite the right thing. In a complex social machine, it is difficult for the units to exercise thought. It is more easy to be obedient automata. It does not even pay to think. Perhaps, thought may prove costly. If the leaders want to create public opinion, the machinery of the press and the wireless makes it most easy. Modern conditions afford propagandists vastly increased opportunities of promoting collective excitement and setting the world in a conflagration. A few clever

* From an address to the Indian Students' Hostel, London, on the occasion of its tenth anniversary, February 1930.

and adventurous leaders can excite people's passions and suppress intellectual freedom. In these circumstances, truth does not win—there is no attempt to find out truth; we prove that what we do desire is truth. It becomes very plausible if we introduce facts and figures. They give a semblance of truth and objectivity. We can be objective and yet untruthful. We may make a show of logic and yet be partisan. Such is the nature of what is called propaganda, which is responsible for all the great disasters of the world.

When you, young men and women, enter your life careers, Bar or Journalism, Commerce or Industry, the Service of the State or the profession of Teaching, you will be the chief agents in the guidance of opinion. You will take a large share in the creation and maintenance of high levels of public opinion and duty. It depends on you whether you are going to be propagandists or prophets of the ideal. In the difficult days ahead of us, only those who neither organise propaganda nor fall victims to it can be helpful.

I am not a politician, but only a student, an observer from the outside. As a teacher of some years' standing, who has worked in different parts of India, I may claim to know the mind of the youth of the country. The situation has an appeal for students of psychology, and an urgency for those interested in the healing of nations. India to-day is in the throes of a Renaissance. There is a realisation that the nations which are bound by tradition overmuch do not make any progress. The civilisation of the ancient Hindus and the Greeks developed in an atmosphere of freedom. When the human mind is enslaved by tyranny of any kind, social or economic, political or religious, we have a Dark Age. It is no accident that th.

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great progress in knowledge and scientific activity in modern Europe coincides exactly with the centuries which have marked a loosening of the grip of authority on the mind of man. A recognition of this fact is in the main responsible for the revolt against authority which is expressing itself in the movements for freedom in religious, social, economic and political fields. When the dust and din of present controversies are over, it would be put down to the lasting credit of Great Britain that she roused the sense of pride and self-respect of a great people and made them keenly conscious of the shame of subjection. At a time of life when impressions are freely received and assimilated, when the world has brought no disappointment to love or frustration to endeavour, when the appeal of idealism is intense and the gates of the future seem wide open, young men and women read the history of freedom-movements. You do not expect them to read the story of Thermopylæ without any emotion. You do not expect them to construe the march of Garibaldi from Palermo to Naples as an exercise in walking along the Serpentine. The adventures of the European nations are not studied solely from the point of view of the final examination. They thrill imagination and kindle aspiration. It is not a matter for surprise that our young men, trained in the history of Western nations and taught for years that nothing is more precious than freedom, that freedom is not only necessary but more essential than anything else in life, have learnt the lesson and are now repeating it. Without freedom, one's country is only a prison. Let us have an India poor and free, rather than rich and in bondage. That is what we hear. When our young men come out to foreign countries and find that the Chinese, the Japanese, the Czech and the Turk are citizens of free

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countries, while the best of them have to bend their heads in shame, it is no wonder that some of them feel the situation so bitterly that they shrink at nothing. I have no doubt that no true Britishers would wish to see India pledge herself to the support of British control in perpetuity; nor is there an Indian who will sever the British connection if it earns its right to be preserved. The cry for independence is the cry of despair. If what the propagandist press asserts is true, that after 150 years of British rule the country would lapse into anarchy and drift into disaster if the British should withdraw, if that is true, it is argued, there can be no more complete indictment of British rule and justification for independence. If helplessness is the price India has to pay for the continuance of British rule, it is our duty to resist and repel it at any cost. These panicky statements need not be taken at their face value. If the cry goes forth from Great Britain 'let us govern,' the response comes from India 'let us cut away.' If the Rothermere Press says that independence would mean anarchy and bloodshed, the non-co-operator replies, 'Better go to hell than suffer slavery on earth.' "To be eaten up by the hordes from northernmost and Central Asia" would be "a position infinitely superior to one of ever growing emasculation." It is a vicious circle that is operating. The Britisher is anxious to quell the qualms of an uneasy conscience by talking in season and out of season of the intellectual inferiority of the Indian, his impractical loyalties, social abuses, illiteracy, ignorance, etc., etc. These are set forth as a justification of the British rule. But every one of these provokes the resentment of the Indian and stirs him to the very depths. The very grounds which the Britisher is anxious to repeat in self-justification cause bitterness in the Indian heart. If

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the process goes on of British contempt for the Indian and the Indian's distrust of the British, things are bound to come to a head. If two groups of men move in such an atmosphere, of condescension and contempt, patronage and pity on the one side and suspicion and distrust, hatred and bitterness on the other, we are preparing for a first class crisis, if not a deadly conflict. Indo-British friendship, which is the greatest world-issue to-day, will be a great step towards the peace of the world, and it is an ideal great enough to make us take risks for it, without talking of dumb masses, humbugs and half-wits. But I think that the leaders of India are ever willing for an honourable settlement of the problem and the most extreme of them will welcome a conference which will look to the rights of the case and put the interests of India in the first place and recognise her desire to control her own destiny as legitimate. It is no use bargaining round a table, one party insisting on securing its foothold as long as possible and the other trying to squeeze as much as possible, as soon as possible. A readjustment of relations on the method of the shop-keeper cannot help us. Goodwill, mutual confidence and an inner appreciation of the other's point of view, a right ordering of loyalties, that is what India needs for peace. She is anxious to secure it in a peaceful way. A firm political connection secured by common interests, a sound economic interchange and mutual industrial helpfulness on healthy lines, a new cultural relationship between two most important sections of humanity, Europe and Asia, in which they could exchange all that is vital and valuable as equal members of the human household, a close partnership in the building of a new and rich culture for the life of a nobler humanity; such a step towards the unity of the whole human race as

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West and
East.

a single family is perhaps not quite in the tradition of the West, but it is undoubtedly the great Indian view. If the British connection means all this, India is for that connection. But if empire means markets for the central power, men, money and munitions for planting the flag in the extremes of the world, the massing of troops of a variety of colours, British, Egyptian, Indian, etc., on the battle fronts as against other groupings, Russian, German, etc., such an empire is a vulgarity, a reaction and a danger to the peace of the world. Friends of peace in India have now a great opportunity of working for the larger objective and binding India to Britain. Such a partnership would help to terminate the age-long conflict of East and West and be of lasting benefit to the human race. If a political system could contain two great sections of mankind, one European and the other Asiatic, on a footing of justice and equality and in a community of spirit, it will prepare for the world federation. It requires nothing more than goodwill and sympathy. Are they difficult to get? Lord Haldane some time before his death wrote in a letter to me: "We Britishers are lacking in imagination and so fail in sympathy." Theoretical justice, practical common sense, a perception of the realities of the case and world peace demand Indian freedom and it is the duty of the clear-sighted and the forward-looking to foster it.

To my Indian friends, I would say, worthy ambitions are not enough, worthy techniques are also necessary. Ideas are poor things until we equip them with wings. The way in which the resolution of independence was passed by men qualifying for the Bar or preparing for the Civil Service, shows the levity and light-heartedness with which serious matters are described and dealt with. The world is not in the hands of blind in consequence. There

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE INTELLECTUALS

is such a thing as the logic of history. [If we are where we are, it is because we are what we are.] We do no service to our country if we pretend that difficulties do not exist. It is no use imagining that there is nothing wrong with ourselves and all that is necessary is a change of government and the millennium would flower in our back-garden the next morning. We would not be able to wipe off our ignorance and misery, our poverty and unemployment. If we want to win the rubber of life, to use a metaphor from the game of Bridge, we have to discard our weak suits and develop our strong ones. Self-government cannot be talked into existence. There is a good deal of work to be done on the home front in social and economic matters. A silent revolution is taking place in the structure of our society. The old bonds are breaking down and a new integration of forms is taking place. There is a slow but steady shifting of the population from the villages to towns. The political and social emancipation of women has not had its full effects worked out. We cannot re-open a past page of history and we require an increased alliance of science and social organisation. It is not the part of courage to abandon difficult problems to Providence. By the conscious and deliberate application of human intelligence, they could and must be solved. Of course we must understand what elements have entered into the national psychology, what the subliminal consciousness of a community contains. The physical weakness, the degenerate manhood of the country is the direct result of social practices. The physical weakness of the people is due to improper diet and lack of sanitation. Clear thinking on many of these problems is necessary. Mere agitation won't carry us far. It is your duty to plan and to build. When you go back and find a thousand

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things waiting to be done, what will you do—join the race for wealth, scramble for place and power and forsake your ideals of to-day ? I ask that question because I know men who were honest and sincere and thoroughly courageous in their University days bade good-bye to all that when they got into the Indian atmosphere. The atmosphere is an acid test. Not many are able to stand it. Will you be of that large number who dreamed great dreams in their University days and became hardened cynics in after life ? Let each one answer for himself. India wants every one of you to stand up against the disruptive agencies of caste and creed and make her more glorious than ever.

Sir S. Radhakrishnan.

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PARTIES IN POLITICS.

Edmund Burke (1729-97) was the greatest political philosopher who has ever spoken in Parliament. His chief contributions to literature are the speeches *On American Taxation* and *On Conciliation with America*—"the most perfect manual for one who approaches the study of public affairs, whether for knowledge or for practice"—and the writings of his public career, *Thoughts on the Present Discontents* (1770) and *Reflections on the French Revolution*. His style is necessarily conditioned by oratory. He possessed the almost unique faculty of winding into a subject, as Johnson said, like a serpent and of building up an argument or a picture. He was proficient in the use of rhetorical figures, though at times he indulged in extravagance and ran away from the subject.

PAGE 2. *Impostors*, ministers who professed the greatest honesty and yet had recourse to bribery and corruption.

Cant, catchword which has temporary sway in politics.

Not men, but measures, the plausible argument employed by the king's friends to decry party connexions and by others to excuse or favour desertion of party.

A gentleman, General Conway who abandoned his party more than once.

PAGE 3. *Cast upon the dice*, lucky chance.

Issue, point in question, a legal term.

Secret tribunal, the forum of one's conscience.

Private whipping, pricks and stings of conscience, self-reproach.

PAGE. 5. *As not.....gentlemen*, without being dishonourable.

GLEANINGS FROM ENGLISH PROSE

In the one.....in the other, enmities...friendships.

A time for all things, Cf. Ecclesiastes, 3. 1.

Embody, form themselves into a body, combine.

PAGE 6. *In the light, "while it is yet day ; for the night cometh wherein no man can work."*

Executory, executive.

Of every other, person or combination of persons.

'Perfect freedom,' quoted from the Book of Common Prayer.
True freedom is restrained liberty and is based on law and order.

PAGE 7. *Last, greatest.*

THE CONVALESCENT.

Charles Lamb (1775-1834) is one of the best beloved of authors and a prince among personal essayists. His essays are wrought out of his experiences, impressions and memories ; they are infused with his emotions and coloured with the lights of his fancy. Much of his charm lies in his whimsicality. His style is in keeping with his personality. The vocabulary is full of surprises and a revelation of his rambles among old books. The sentences take unexpected turns or are punctuated with dashes and parentheses. The essays are freely interspersed with scraps of quotations, many of them from his favourite Elizabethan authors.

PAGE 8. *Tergiversation, changing sides ; fickleness of conduct*

Marc Clausum, enclosed sea.

The Two Tables of the Law, given by God to Moses on Mt. Sinai and containing His commandments, Exodus, 31. 18.

PAGE 9. *Honing, murmuring, whining.*

Bowels, self-pity.

PAGE 10. *Douceur, fee.*

PAGE 12. *Lernean, pangs which Hercules felt when fighting with the monster Hydra in the marshes of Lerna, near Argos.*

Philoctetes, the most celebrated archer in the Trojan War on account of the bow and the poisoned arrows which Hercules had

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bequeathed to him and without which, an oracle had declared, Troy could not be taken. After Troy fell, he lost his importance and became an ordinary person.

In Articulo Mortis, at the point of death; it is a quibble on 'article.'

PAGE 13. *Tityus*, a giant who, when cast into Tartarus, lay outstretched on the ground, covering 9 acres, whilst two vultures (or two snakes) devoured his liver.

THE TWO FUNCTIONS OF LITERATURE.

Thomas De Quincey (1785-1859) is a miscellaneous essayist and a master of English prose style, of "impassioned prose" in particular. In his *Confessions of an English Opium Eater* and *Autobiography* he has related the singular adventures of his errant youth and the results of opium-eating to which he became addicted. Some of the best specimens of his essays, such as are quite sure of their place in literature, are *The Revolt of the Tartars*, *The Spanish Military Nun*, *Murder considered as one of the Fine Arts*, *Joan of Arc*, *The Cæsars*, *The English Mail Coach*. While at times tediously diffuse and prolix, De Quincey is original in narration and excellent in exposition; his humour is intensely individual and his gorgeous rhetorical style, even if matched, is unsurpassed.

PAGE 14. *Insulation*, isolation.

Dry light, "understanding and judgment" in Bacon's words.

Humid light, "Which is ever infused and drenched in affections and customs."

Iris, rainbow.

PAGE 15. *Jacob's ladder*, "set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it"—*Genesis*, 28.12.

PAGE 16. *Epopœe*, epic.

Forensic, of the law-courts.

PAGE 17. *Quamdiu.....gesserit*, how long a good life was lived.

GLEANINGS FROM ENGLISH PROSE

Newton, (1642-1727), the celebrated mathematician, astronomer and philosopher.

La Place, (1749-1827), French scientist. He showed exceptional gifts as a mathematician. Later he gained the reputation of being the greatest of French astronomers; he was equally great as a physicist.

Nominis umbra, shadow of a name.

Iliad, Homer's epic.

The Prometheus, one of the tragedies.

PAGE 18. *Praxiteles*, one of the most distinguished sculptors of Greece, flourished in the 4th cent. before Christ.

Michael Angelo, (1475-1564), the greatest of the Renaissance artists of Italy, distinguished for painting, sculpture, architecture and poetry.

BIOGRAPHY.

Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881), miscellaneous essayist, historian and thinker, produced in *Sartor Resartus* his first characteristic and original book. But its success was far less than that of the *French Revolution*. He himself recognised, when he wrote the last word of it, that he had done something which posterity would not easily let die and said to his wife, "You have not had for a hundred years any book that comes more direct and flamingly from the heart of a living man." His peculiar historical method reappeared in *Past and Present*; and then he set it to a new and arduous task in *Oliver Cromwell's Letters and Speeches*. But his most ambitious work, though not his greatest success, was the *History of Frederick the Great*. He also delivered lectures, one series of which he published later as a book entitled *Heroes and Hero-Worship*. His eccentric style, which had at first irritated the precisians on account of its peculiar devices, tricks and exotic—specially German—constructions, became, at its best, an object of admiration for its virility, its humour and pathos, its vivid and arresting presentation, its flashes of poetry.

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PAGE 19. *It is written*, by Alexander Pope in his *Essay on Man*, a didactic poem.

PAGE 21. *The Transfiguration*, of Christ on Mt. Thabor, a painting by Raphael (1483-1520) and his last work.

Elysian, heavenly, Elysium being in Greek Mythology the abode of the blessed after death.

Tartarean, infernal; Tartarus is the nether region.

The Vatican, the greatest palace in the world, the residence of the Popes.

Chimborazo.....Teneriffe, works of Nature; Chimborazo is an extinct volcano in the Andes Range; Teneriffe, the largest of the Canary islands, has also an extinct volcano whose highest point is over 12,000 ft. high.

Dome, of heaven, the firmament.

Arcturus and Orion, star and constellation.

PAGE 22. '*History.....Biographies*', so it is to Carlyle.

'*Philosophy.....Experience*,' Cf. the maxim of Dionysius of Halicarnassus quoted by Bolingbroke in his essay on *The Use of History*; 'History is philosophy teaching by examples'.

Hoo-hoo, hoots.

PAGE 23. *Ossian's*, legendary Irish hero and bard. Macpherson claimed to have discovered and translated his literary work 1760-63.

Plenum, space filled up with matter.

Long-ear, long ears is stupidity as of an ass.

PAGE 24. *Professor Gottfried Sauerteig*, Carlyle himself; he often puts his own sentiments into the mouths of imaginary philosophers—Smelfungus, Sauerteig, Teufelsdröckh. 'Sauerteig' is German for 'leaven'.

Springwurzeln, is really a magic root at whose touch iron doors and safes at once fly open, and is therefore used by treasure-hunters.

Rousseau's Confessions, the autobiography of the French philosopher and writer Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-78).

PAGE 25. '*Machinery*', contrivances, especially supernatural personages and incidents, used in literary work.

GLEANINGS FROM ENGLISH PROSE

Epigoniad, the epic of the Epigoni, the sons of the seven heroes who went against Thebes.

PAGE 26. *Lusiad*, the epic of the Portuguese by their poet Camoens, written in 1572.

Hoydenish, as that of a boisterous girl.

Shaster, *Shastra*.

PAGE 27. *Tom Jones*, by Henry Fielding (1767-54), one of the greatest novels ever written.

Meister, by Goethe (1749-1832); *Wilhelm Meister's Lehrjahre* is his greatest novel, followed by *Wilhelm Meister's Wanderjahre*.

Crusoe, the world-famous *Robinson Crusoe* by Daniel Defoe (1659-1731).

PAGE 28. *Pelasgic*, earliest; the Pelasgi were the earliest inhabitants of Greece who established the worship of gods not called by proper names.

PAGE 29. *Lord Clarendon, History of the Great Rebellion*, written by Edward Hyde, Earl of Clarendon (1608-74).

PAGE 30. *Boswell's Life of Johnson*, a supreme biography written by James Boswell (1740-95), a person apparently of no great ability but with an insatiable interest in Johnson.

PAGE 31. *Golgotha*, "a place of a skull" (*Matthew*, 27-33) where Christ was crucified.

Calista, Cf. Cardinal Newman's historical novel, *Callista*.

Open secret, Goethe's expression for the sacred mystery of the universe; the great secret open to all, seen by almost none.

PAGE 34. *Parson White in Selborne*, Gilbert White (1720-93), naturalist, remembered chiefly by his *Natural History and Antiquities of Selborne*.

PAGE 36. *Moreris.....Pecks*, a whole list of biographies of widely differing values.

Croker, John Wilson (1780-1857), Irish writer and politician, known owing to Macaulay's fierce attack on his edition of *Boswell's Life of Johnson*

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ATHENIAN ORATORY.

Lord Macaulay (1800—1859) was precocious as a child. He could read at the age of three and at seven he began an epitome of universal history. His memory was so prodigious that a fact once known or a line once learnt was not easily forgotten. In 1818 he entered Trinity College, Cambridge, where he won a brilliant reputation for classical learning, and was elected a Fellow in 1824. He became a barrister but earned a living by writing. In 1825 he contributed to *The Edinburgh Review* his *Essay on Milton* which made Jeffrey, the editor, exclaim, "The more I think the less I can conceive where you picked up that style!" In 1830 he was returned as M. P. for the pocket borough of Calne. He became a Commissioner of the Board of Control in 1832 but found time for literary work and produced many of his essays. From 1834 to 1838 he was in India as legal adviser to the Supreme Council of India. On his return he began his *History of England*, the first volume of which appeared in 1848. In 1842 he published *The Lays of Ancient Rome*. He had re-entered Parliament but writing was his chief occupation for the last fifteen years of his life. Macaulay as an essayist has plenty of information to give, though a great deal of what he says is commonplace. His style is clear and direct but it lacks benignity and suggestion.

The prefatory lines are from Milton's *Paradise Regained*, Book IV, ll. 267—271.

PAGE 38. *The doctrine which he established*, in the *Poetics*.

Nebuchadnezzar, the Babylonian king whose dream is mentioned in *The Book of Daniel*, ch. 2.

Dionysius, of Halicarnassus, a celebrated Greek rhetorician, who lived many years at Rome in the reign of the Emperor Augustus and died B. C. 7.

PAGE 39. *Quintilian* (40—118), the most celebrated of Roman rhetoricians, distinguished chiefly as a teacher of eloquence. His great work is a complete system of rhetoric in 12 books.

Aeschylus, *Euripides*, form together with Sophocles the great

GLEANINGS FROM ENGLISH PROSE

trinity of Attic tragic dramatists.

Homer, the Greek epic poet, author of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.

Blue-stocking, learned, having or affecting literary tastes and learning.

Cicero, the famous Roman orator, who wrote rhetorical and philosophical works, speeches and epistles.

PAGE 40. *Longinus*, a distinguished Greek philosopher and grammarian of the 3rd cent. At first he taught at Athens; afterwards he went to the East to the court of Zenobia of Palmyra who made him her teacher of Greek. The treatise *On the Sublime* is commonly attributed to him.

Montesquieu (1689—1755), French political historian, author of *Lettres persanes* and *De l'esprit des Lois*.

Burke, who wrote *A Philosophical Inquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (1756).

Dugald Stuart, Scottish philosopher who wrote *Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind*, *Philosophical Essays* and *The Philosophy of the Active and Moral Powers*. He died in 1828.

Noble prayer of Ajax, one of the bravest of the Greek warriors at the siege of Troy.

Cowley, Abraham (1618—67), one of the metaphysical poets.

PAGE 41. *Eugene of Savoy*, Italian prince and soldier, the leader of the Allies together with Marlborough in the War of the Spanish Succession.

Caffraria or.....*Otaheite*, in benighted Africa or in the Pacific island of Tahiti.

PAGE 42. "*Fools.....invocations*," adapted from Shakespeare's *As You Like It*, Act II, Sc. V.

Aeneid, the Latin epic by Vergil dealing with the adventures and exploits of Aeneas.

The house of the Virgin at Loretto, the Santa Casa or holy house, the home of the Virgin Mary at Nazareth, miraculously

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translated to Loretto, a city of Italy.

Callimachus, a celebrated Alexandrian grammarian and poet of the 3rd cent. B. C.

Phalaris, a ruler of Agrigentum in Sicily to whom the Epistles bearing the name of Phalaris were attributed, but they have been proved by Bentley to be the work of some sophist.

Livy, (B. C. 59—A. D. 17) the Roman historian.

Polybius, (B. C. 204-122) the Greek historian of Rome.

Plutarch, a Greek who lived in the 1st Century A. D. and wrote the *Parallel Lives* of 46 eminent Greeks and Romans arranged in pairs for the sake of comparison.

Xenophon, (B. C. 444-355 ?), an Athenian soldier and writer, author of *Anabasis*, the story of the march of the Ten Thousand, *Cyropaedia*, the boyhood and training of Cyrus, *Hellenica*, a continuation of the history of Thucydides, *Memorabilia* of Socrates, *Economics*, a treatise on household management.

Rollin, Charles (1661-1741), a Frenchman, Rector of the University of Paris, who wrote *Ancient History and Roman History*.

Gillies, John (1747-1836), historian, who wrote the history of ancient Greece and of the reign of Frederick II of Prussia.

Miss Porter (1776-1850), whose *Scottish Chiefs* is an excellent melodramatic romance dealing with the time of Wallace.

Miss Lee, wrote the 1st part of a sentimental tale dealing with the days of Queen Elizabeth and published in 1786.

Sir Nathaniel Wraxall (1751-1831), a Civil Servant of the East India Company who after his return to Europe travelled for nearly 7 years. His *Memoirs* continued from 1784 to 1790, was published in 3 vols. in 1836.

PAGE 43. *Samuel Johnson*, the 18th century literary dictator.
Demosthenes, the greatest of Athenian orators.

PAGE 44. *Fleet Street*, the centre of the newspaper life of the country.

Mr. Thrale, the great brewer, friend of Johnson.

Thucydides, the greatest of the Greek historians.

GLEANINGS FROM ENGLISH PROSE

Rumford, Count, an American of many talents who had quite an adventurous career in Europe specially in the civil and military service of the Elector of Bavaria. He devoted himself also to physical investigations for which he had a passion from boyhood.

PAGE 45. *Phidias*, the greatest sculptor and statuary of Greece.

Priam... *Achilles*, Priam, the king of Troy at the time of the Trojan war, went, after the death of his son Hector, to the tent of Achilles to ransom his son's body for burial (*Iliad*, XXIV).

Socrates, the celebrated Athenian philosopher, the chief interlocutor in the Dialogues of Plato.

Prytanes, Committees at Athens for presiding over public business.

Pericles, the greatest of Athenian statesmen under whose administration Athens attained to considerable splendour.

Aspasia, an Athenian blue-stocking, the mistress of Pericles.

PAGE 46. *Horace*, the Roman poet in his *Ars Poetica*, the Art of Poetry.

PAGE 47. *Gerard Dow*, 17th century Dutch painter.

Moore, Thomas, the Irish poet.

Coleridge, the poet and critic of the Romantic Revival.

Beattie, James (1735-1803), poet and essayist who was Professor of Moral Philosophy.

Berkeley, George (1685-1753), the idealistic philosopher.

PAGE 48. *Pisistratus*, the tyrant of Athens in the 6th century B. C.

Themistocles, the political leader in Athens for several years from B. C. 483.

PAGE 49. *Pope and his imitators*, Alexander Pope (1688-1744) and the neo-classical school.

PAGE 50. *The Peloponnesian war*, from B. C. 431 to 404 between the various Greek states.

The Cyclades, a group of islands in the Aegean Sea, the most important being Delos.

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PAGE 51. *Aegospotami*, a town in the Thracian Chersonesus.
A *Macedonian sovereign*, Alexander the Great.

Pentathlete, a Greek who took part in a quintuple contest—running, jumping, wrestling, quoiting and javelin-throwing.

Cestus, the boxing gauntlets worn by the ancient prize-fighters.

Iphicrates, a famous Athenian general who introduced into the Athenian army the targeteers, a body of troops possessing to a certain extent the advantages of heavy and light-armed forces.

PAGE 52. *Condottieri*, leaders of mercenary military companies, here the term is applied to politicians.

Lysias, an Attic orator ; he died in 378 at the age of 80.

Aeschines, the Athenian orator, the rival of Demosthenes.

Isocrates, v. Emerson's *Clubs*.

PAGE 53. *Prolegomena*, preliminary remarks.

DOWNFALL OF ANCIENT CIVILISATION.

Cardinal Newman, John Henry (1801—90) is one of the great glories of English prose. He was educated at Trinity College, Oxford. He was not very successful at first but in 1823 obtained an Oriel Fellowship, whereby he became vicar of the University Church, St. Mary's ; for some twenty years he preached from its pulpit sermons unlike anything else of their kind. Turning away from Evangelicalism, he became one of the leaders of the Oxford Tractarian Movement which resulted in the conversion of many including himself to Roman Catholicism. From 1854-58 he was Rector of the Catholic University in Dublin ; the lectures he delivered in his official capacity form the volume called *The Idea of a University* which it would be hard to match among the prose of its time both for valuable thought and wonderfully varied skill in presentment. The *Apologia Pro Vita Sua* (1864), in which he availed himself of Kingsley's clumsy attack, contains the history of his own religious life. *His Grammar of Assent* deals with the philosophy of faith. Newman wrote also in verse, which

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has a beauty all its own. One piece, *The Pillar of the Cloud* is known to every one as the hymn *Lead, kindly light* and *The Dream of Gerontius* has been set to music.

PAGE 54. *The Prince of Peace*, Christ.

Certain of the Caesars, the Emperors Caligula and Claudius and especially Nero.

The Five good Emperors, Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian, Antoninus Pius, Marcus Aurelius Antoninus known collectively as the Age of the Antonines (96—180), the happiest period of the Roman Empire.

PAGE 55. *Palatine Hill*, one of the seven Hills on which Rome was built.

PAGE 56. *Ostia*, a town at the mouth of the river Tiber, and the harbour of Rome.

Terracina, a town further south on the sea-coast.

Baiæ, a town in Campania, situated in a beautiful country, on a small bay west of Naples; it was the favourite watering-place of the Romans.

Tertullian, a native of Carthage who was converted to Christianity and became a theologian and the founder of a Christian Latin literature. He died in 222.

PAGE 57. *Ptolemies*, a dynasty of Egyptian kings (305 B. C. A. D. 40).

Galileans, Christians, so-called from Galilee, the Roman province of Palestine and the home of Christ during his hidden life.

PAGE 58. *In the words of inspiration*, from the Bible.

The Goth, a Teutonic people, dwelling on the shores of the Baltic in the 1st cent. In the 3rd cent. they were fighting the Romans in the south-east of Europe.

The Hun, a horde of Asiatics who invaded and overran Europe in the 4th cent. doing much damage under their leader Attila.

The Lombard, a people of Europe whose first home was Germany

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but towards the end of the 5th cent. they invaded Italy, conquering much of it including the district still known as Lombardy. They were in general hostile to the Popes.

PAGE 59. *Pope Gregory*, the First, called the Great.

The Prophet Ezekiel, the author of the Book of Ezekiel in the Old Testament.

PAGE 60. *Antioch*, the capital of Syria and long the chief city of Asia. It was one of the earliest strongholds of the Christian faith.

Festival of the Ascension, the feast day which commemorates Christ's ascent into heaven 40 days after his resurrection in the presence of the Apostles who were assembled on Mt. Olivet.

Berytus, one of the oldest sea-ports of Phoenicia and a celebrated seat of learning.

Monte Cassino, in the territory of Naples, built by St. Benedict of Nursia (488—543), the chief founder and Patriarch of Monasticism in the West.

PAGE 61. *The Fathers*, the Christian theological writers of the first five centuries.

PAGE 62. *Asturias*, a district in the north of Spain, bordering the Bay of Biscay.

Arianism, the heretical doctrine of Arius of Alexandria regarding the nature of Christ. It was condemned by the Council of Micaea (328 A. D.)

In the shallows of the Adriatic, out of which arose the city of Venice.

The Steward of the Household, the reigning Pontiff or Pope.

The Imperial City, Rome.

PAGE 63. *Gregory.....Leo*, the Popes.

The fabulous Hesperides, the islands in the farthest west containing, according to ancient myth, the gardens of the maidens who guarded the golden apples.

Two sister islands, Britain (Brittania) and Ireland (Hibernia).

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CLUBS.

Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-82), an American author who visited England and lectured there and kept up a close connection with his English friends notably Carlyle, earned a living by preaching and lecturing, but his reputation was really made by his writings, especially his essays. The first in importance as in time is the tract *Nature*; in it and in its successor, *The American Scholar*, he outlined the principles of his transcendental philosophy. What he teaches chiefly is the Divine immanence in the world—no new discovery but a cogent and attractive re-statement. In 1841 he published his first volume of *Essays* and six years later his first volume of *Poems*. *Representative Men*, his next work of importance, are lectures delivered in England and Scotland in 1845 and published in 1850. The visit to England inspired also *English Traits*. His later writings include *The Conduct of Life* (1850), *Society and Solitude* (1870), *Letters and Social Aims* (1876).

PAGE 67. *Sancho Panza*, the squire of Don Quixote in Cervantes' immortal novel.

Isocrates (B. C. 436-338), an Attic orator and teacher of rhetoric.

PAGE 68. *Sequins*, valuable coins and coinlike ornaments.

PAGE 69. *Diderot*, the French encyclopaedist of the 18th cent.
Abbe Galiani, an Italian writer on political economy.

PAGE 70. *Sphinx*, a she-monster who is said to have proposed a riddle to the Thebans and to have murdered all who could not solve it. Oedipus solved it and thereupon the Sphinx slew herself.

Periander, a tyrant of Corinth, a patron of literature and philosophy, commonly reckoned among the Seven Sages.

Hagiology, or hagiography, lives and legends of saints.

Menu or *Manu*, the reputed author of the Code of Manu.

Zertusht or Zoroaster or Zarathustra, the founder of the Zoroastrian religion.

Luther, Martin, the German religious reformer who translated the Bible and wrote some theological treatises. His *Table-Talk* is

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a miscellany of anecdotes, parables etc. His *Commentary on the Galatians* is a commentary on the Epistle of St. Paul to the Galatians.

PAGE 71. *Boswell*, the friend and constant companion of Dr. Johnson whose *Life* he wrote.

The great German master, Goethe.

Eckermann (1792-1854), friend of Goethe. His *Conversations* are of the greatest value for the light they throw on Goethe both as a poet and as a man.

Norse, early Scandinavian. The prose *Edda* contains the ancient Icelandic account of the Scandinavian religion.

Valhalla, a palace assigned by Odin (or Woden), the supreme God of the Teutonic religion—after whom the 4th day of our week is named—to the heroes who have been slain in battle and who feast there with the Gods.

Jotuns, Giants; they represent the principle of evil.

PAGE 72. *Balder*, the Sun God, the Good and the Beautiful, son of Odin and Frigg, husband of Nanna.

Aesir, the assembly of the gods.

Omnis.....est, all definition is risky.

Leibnitz, the German scholar and mathematician. He discovered a new method of the calculus which led to a dispute with Sir Isaac Newton, the English mathematician, astronomer and philosopher.

Schiller, the German poet and dramatist. He was a great friend of Goethe, the versatile German genius and poet, and ranks next to him among Germany's greatest poets.

Madam de Staël, (1766-1817), a famous French writer, conversationalist and society woman.

Hegel, (1770-1831), a famous German philosopher, one of the foremost exponents of Idealism.

Victor Cousin, (1792-1867), a French philosopher and the founder of systematic eclecticism in modern philosophy.

Linnæus, Swedish botanist. He laid the foundations of

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modern botanical nomenclature.

Jussieu, member of a French family which for a century and a half numbered among its members some of the first botanists of the age.

Dr. Dalton, English scientist and one of the greatest of chemists. He is best known for his statement of the Atomic Theory of Matter which postulates that the elements unite in definite proportions by weight. He laid down also two important laws.

PAGE 73. *Hyde*, the 4th Earl of Rochester.

The Charter, the Magna Carta which had already been published.

Beaumarchais, (1732-99), a French dramatist, the author of *The Barber of Seville*, *The Marriage of Figaro*. For some time he served in the king's secret service; he also took an active part in securing the help of France for the American Colonies in the War of Independence.

Franklin, Benjamin, an American politician and scientist. He helped to draw up the Declaration of Independence (1776) and, later on, the constitution of the United States. His scientific research was mainly in electricity, a practical result being his invention of the lightning conductor.

Mirabeau, the politician and orator in the early days of the French Revolution.

Talleyrand, a French statesman. He was twice ambassador to England for France. When Louis XVI was executed, he was banished and lived in America. From 1797-1807 he was the foreign minister and he represented France at the Congress of Vienna (1815).

PAGE 74. *The Olympic games*, celebrated after an interval of four years in the small plain in Elis called Olympia.

PAGE 75. *Marchioness of Rambouillet*, one of the most accomplished and illustrious women of the 17th cent. An Italian by birth, she married a Frenchman. The Hotel Rambouillet was famous for a series of years.

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Cardinal Richelieu, the minister of Louis XIII, King of France.

The French Academy, founded in 1635 with its 40 members known as the Immortals.

The Mermaid Club, which met at the Mermaid Tavern that formerly stood in Cheapside, London. Here Shakespeare and the other dramatists and poets are supposed to have foregathered. *Selden* was a jurist; he is now remembered almost entirely by his *Table Talk* (1689). *Aubrey*, John, was an antiquary and folklorist.

PAGE 76. *Harrington's Club*, James Harrington (1611-77) was the author of a political treatise named *Occana*. To give effect to some of the views expressed in this book, he and his friends formed a club, the *Rota*.

Dr. Bentley's Club, Dr. Bentley was a classical scholar and Master of Trinity College, Cambridge.

Wren, was the architect who built the new St. Paul's Cathedral and designed several other churches.

Evelyn, is now known by his *Diary*, a mine of information about the life of the time and one of the outstanding books of its kind. *Locke* is the philosopher who wrote *Essay Concerning the Human Understanding*, *On Civil Government*, *Letter on Toleration*.

The club of Dr. Johnson, the club which gathered round Dr. Johnson. At first it was a small society of friends founded by *Reynolds*, the painter, and Johnson in 1764. When Boswell was elected in 1773, among the members were Johnson and Reynolds, Burke, Goldsmith and Garrick, the actor, Gibbon, the historian, and Charles Fox, the politician came in the next year. *Topham Beauclerk*, the witty but dissolute man of the world and *Percy*, the author of the *Reliques of Poetry* and afterwards a Bishop, came later.

The capital of New England, Boston, the capital of Massachusetts, one of the six north-eastern states of the United States which form New England.

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New Jerusalem, the new sacred city like the real Jerusalem in Palestine.

PAGE 77. *Marvell*, Andrew (1621-78), Milton's friend and fellow-Puritan is an imaginative as well as a descriptive poet.

PAGE 78. *Convives*, table companion, fellow guest.

Herrick, Robert, the 17th cent. lyric poet.

PAGE 79. *The Cid*, the Spanish hero whose exploits are described in the epic, *The Cid*.

The British Association, the learned society founded in 1831 for the advancement of science. It meets every year and an address is delivered by the president, an eminent scientist; sectional meetings are held at the same time for the discussion of matters of importance.

L'homme de lettres, the man of letters.

Tuscaroora.....*Canada*, names of good seed-corn.

PEACE.

John Bright (1811-89), statesman and orator. Born and bred in Liberal principles, he took an active part in the Reform movement of 1831-32 and became one of the leaders of the Anti-Corn-Law League. He entered Parliament in 1844 as member for Durham and subsequently represented Manchester and Birmingham. He opposed the Crimean War and in that connection delivered the most famous of his speeches. He was a Minister in the various administrations of Gladstone from 1868 onwards. As a speaker, he was simple but passionate and impressive, often biblical in phrase and allusion, with a homely, mordant wit. Lord Salisbury said of him, "He was the greatest master of English oratory that this generation has seen. At a time when much speaking has almost exterminated eloquence, he maintained that robust, powerful and vigorous style in which he gave fitting expression to the burning and noble thoughts he desired to utter."

PAGE 81. *Lord John Russell* (1792-1878), succeeded Peel as

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Prime Minister of a Whig government in 1836. He became Foreign Secretary in the coalition under Lord Aberdeen in 1851, but owing to his mismanagement of the Crimean War he was obliged to resign.

PAGE 82. *Admiral Napier* (1786-1860), was M. P. for some years at two different periods; in 1854 he was appointed Commander-in-chief in the Baltic against Russia.

The hon. Member for the West Riding, Richard Cobden (1804-65), the ally of Bright; from 1847 to 1857 he was M. P. for the West Riding of Yorkshire.

PAGE 84. *That great war*, with France.

A Bonaparte on the throne, Charles Louis Napoleon Bonaparte (1808-73), nephew of Napoleon I, was elected President of the French Republic after the Revolution of 1848. In 1851, by a *coup d'état*, he dissolved the constitution and established a military despotism. The next year he became Emperor.

Chobham, in Surrey.

Spithead, near Portsmouth, used frequently by warships.

PAGE 85. *The present queen of that country*, Isabella (1830-1904) daughter of King Ferdinand VII of Spain. She was deposed in 1870.

The Queen of Portugal, Queen Maria. In 1852 a revised constitution was drawn up acceptable to all parties. Shortly afterwards the Queen died and her eldest son ascended the throne in 1853 as Pedro V.

PAGE 86. *The Syrian Question*, Mehemet Ali (1769-1849), a Turkish soldier of humble origin, had brought Egypt under his control and was made Viceroy and Pasha by the Sultan. The French, seeing in him a bulwark against English power, advocated the union of Egypt and Syria. The English resisted and threatened to make war.

PAGE 87. *The Roman Republic*, found in 1849 by Mazzini and other revolutionaries whose object was to make Italy one country under one ruler.

The Pope, Pius IX, the temporal ruler of the Papal States. He

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called on France for aid. The Republicans defended themselves stubbornly but in the end Garibaldi, Mazzini and others of the leaders took to flight and for years afterwards the French held Rome as the allies and guard of the Pope.

The case of Hungary, the Hungarian revolution. The Magyars who demanded governmental institutions of their own, separate from those of Austria, rose in violent insurrection and succeeded in establishing a government under Kossuth as provisional president. The Austrians asked for the aid of Russia and the insurgent state was invaded, and in 1849 it surrendered, Kossuth and the other leaders seeking safety in flight.

PAGE 88. *The Bear.....is,* Russia ; the hug of a bear is fatal.

PAGE 90. *The small cloud.....hand,* the reference is to 1 Kings, 18.44.

A decrepit.....sustain, Turkey, which, however, did not fall to pieces.

PAGE 92. *The Corn-law,* had fixed duties on the import of corn ; it was repealed in 1846.

Purchase, price fixed according to the probable years of possession and enjoyment in case you offered to buy the monarchy.

"Nation.....more," from *Isaiah*, ii. 4.

THE VOLUNTEER STUDENT.

Charles Dickens (1812-70), is too well known as a novelist to need an account here. For some time he devoted his energy to journalism and to the public readings of his novels which he gave in England and America. He wrote excellent descriptive sketches which may be read in the volume called *the Uncommercial Traveller*. *The Volunteer Student* is taken from his *Addresses and Speeches*. He knew from experience what it was to be such a student. He was no half-educated man of the average University type ; he was educated in the best university of the world—that of adversity.

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PAGE 95. *The Lord's Prayer, the Our Father.*

PAGE 96. *Mr. Babbage, Charles* (1791-1871), filled from 1828 to 1838 the sinecure of Lucasian Professor of Mathematics at Cambridge. He was a prolific writer; foremost among his writings is his extremely correct and well arranged Table of Logarithms. He constructed a Calculating Machine and wrote ably *On the Economy of Manufactures and Machinery*, in addition to other works such as *Ninth Bridgewater Treatise* (1837).

PAGE 97. *Lord Lytton* (1803-73) famous chiefly for his novels and plays which in their time enjoyed great popularity.

PAGE 99. "*Encyclopaedia*," one furnishing information in all difficulties.

PAGE 100. *Carlyle, Thomas* (1795-1881), the great historian, author of the *French Revolution, Past and Present, Oliver Cromwell's Letters and Speeches, History of Frederick the Great*. He also wrote *Sartor Resartus*, from which Ruskin quotes in his speech on War.

PAGE 103. *Franklin, Benjamin* (1706-90), American politician and scientist, inventor of the lightning conductor.

Celestial Empire, Chinese.

PAGE 104. *Rev. Sydney Smith* (1771-1845), divine and journalist, one of the founders of the *Edinburgh Review*, famous for his wit and reforming zeal.

The Admirable Crichton, James Crichton (1500-82) known as the Admirable Crichton for his prodigious memory, great powers as a linguist—he is said to have argued in twelve languages—and much ability as a writer of verse.

Apparition.....head, in Shakespeare's tragedy of *Macbeth*, IV. i.

PAGE 105. *One of the foremost.....speakers, John Bright.*

Aladdin's ring, by rubbing which Alladin in the Arabian tale could conjure his genius or friendly attendant spirit.

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WAR.

John Ruskin (1819-1900), an ardent student and critic of art and then of life in its varied aspects, but specially social and economic. His collected works fill 39 volumes and include *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*, *Sesame and Lilies*, *The Stones of Venice*, *Unto This Last*, *The Crown of Wild Olive*. "Stimulating and fascinating beyond all writers of his generation in detached utterances, he was less like a builder than a sower, scattering seed to right and left with careless hand. Some of his seed fell on the wayside, some among thorns, much in shallow soil. What fell on good ground profoundly influenced the movement of the world for half a century."

PAGE 107. *Tintoret* (1518-94), ranked by Ruskin among the "five supreme painters."

PAGE 108. *The office of Samuel*, as a religious judge, 1 Sam. vii ; viii, 1.

The arrow and the bow, as the god who punishes.

The lyre, as the god of song and music.

The helmet and the shield, as a goddess of war.

The shuttle, as the patroness of the useful and elegant arts such as weaving.

PAGE 109. *Born.....wolf*, Romulus, the legendary founder and first king of Rome, and his twin brother Remus were the sons of a Vestal by the god Mars. They were ordered to be drowned but were miraculously saved and suckled by a she-wolf.

'Pacis imponere morem,' from Vergil's *Aeneid*, VI, 851, 'to enforce the maintenance of peace.'

PAGE 110. *City*, Venice.

Their king, Henry Dandolo (1108-1205), doge of Venice in 1192, one of the leaders in the Fourth Crusade. The story that he was blinded is not now believed.

PAGE 111. *The Muse of History*, Clio.

Nor all dragon's.....men, armed men, called Sparti or the Sown sprang up from the dragon's teeth sown by Cadmus.

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Genseric (406-477), King of the Vandals, a renowned warrior.
Suwarrow (1729-1800), Count Alexander, a famous Russian field-marshal, notorious for his cruelty.

Just terminated war, the Civil War (1861-65).

PAGE 113. *Laborious orders*, labouring classes.

Olympic, of the Olympic games in Elis.

PAGE 115. *Battersea*, a suburb of London on the Thames.

The greatest of our English thinkers, Carlyle in his *Sartor Resartus*.

PAGE 118. *Mr. Helps*, Sir Arthur Helps (1813-57), a Victorian didactic essayist, author of *Friends in Council* and *Companions of My Solitude*.

PAGE 119. *Muller's Dorians*, Karl O. Muller (1797-1840), an archaeologist and author of many works.

Aristodemus, one of the conquerors of the Peloponnesus.

Isadus, a valiant Spartan who fought against the Thebans.

PAGE 120. *Gettysburg*, in Pennsylvania, the scene of one of the great battles during the American Civil War.

PAGE 123. *Captain by divine right*, king.

PAGE 125. *The god of flies*, Beelzebub, a devil.

PAGE 127. *Peacocky*, showy.

Red coat, as a soldier.

In a black one, as a civilian, in civil life.

PAGE 128. *Britomart*, the Lady who represents armed Chastity in Spenser's *Faerie Qucene*.

PAGE 129. *Exeter Hall*, in London, used for religious, dramatic and musical performances.

Bethels, from Hebrew *Beth-el*, house of God ; churches.

PAGE 131. *Baron Liebig*, (1803-73), professor of chemistry and a celebrated chemist.

'Ashes to ashes,' from the Burial Service.

PAGE 134. *'Integer.....purus,* from one of Horace's *Odes* ;

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the man upright of life and free from guilt.

Equites, knights ; also horsemen.

Chivalry, means also horsemen, cavalry.

PAGE 135. *You must bind.....hearts*, refer to *Proverbs*, iii. 3.

PAGE 137. *Beat swords into ploughshares*, v. *Isaiah*, ii, 4 ;
Micah, iv, 3.

PAGE 138. *Obedience*, Cf. *1 Sam.* xv, 22.

Your Bibles being attacked, refer to the Colenso controversy.
Bishop Colenso of Natal, South Africa, wrote *The Pentateuch and Book of Joshua Critically Examined*.

PAGE 139. '*In Righteousness.....war*,' from *Rev.* xix, 11.

A SENSITIVE AGITATOR.

Walter Bagehot (1826-1877) was a distinguished man of affairs as well as a distinguished man of letters. After a brilliant scholastic career, he was called to the Bar, but gave up the legal profession for the family calling of a banker. He was made a partner in the bank but much of his time was occupied in writing. Some of his books are well known, *Physics and Politics*, *The English Constitution*, *Lombard Street*, *Economic Studies*, *Literary Studies*. For a long time till his death he edited the *Economist*. "To the category of criticism all Bagehot's work belongs. He is the purely critical spirit of the Mid-Victorian era as Samuel Butler was of its close."

PAGE 140. *Cobden*, (1804-65) founded the Anti-Corn Law League at Manchester in 1838 to obtain the repeal of the Corn Laws which imposed a protective duty on wheat imported from abroad to further the principle of free trade in general.

Belgravia, fashionable London district.

PAGE 141. "*Natural selection*," a biological term used by Darwin.

O' Connell, Daniel (1775-1847), Irish patriot and politician.

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PAGE 142. *Hunt*, Leigh (1784-1859), better known as a man of letters.

Cobbett, William (1762-1835), English reformer, author of *Rural Rides*.

Recording angel, who registers men's good and bad deeds.

Sir Robert Peel, Prime Minister for the third time from 1841 to 1846 in which year he repealed the Corn Laws in face of tremendous opposition.

PAGE 144. *Wealth of Nations*, the famous book of Adam Smith published in 1776.

Lord Houghton, (1809-85) English scholar and politician ; he displayed distinct talents as a wit.

Aristotle, in his *Rhetoric*.

POLITICAL EDUCATION.

Earl Baldwin (1867-) was educated at Harrow and Trinity College, Cambridge. Later he entered his father's engineering business. In 1908 he became M.P. for the Bewdley Division of Worcestershire, and was President of the Board of Trade 1921-22 and Chancellor of the Exchequer 1922-23. In May 1923 Bonar Law resigned and Baldwin became Prime Minister for the first time, then again in October 1924 and in 1935. He retired from politics and public life in 1937. He has written books dealing with his travels and adventures. Several of his speeches and addresses have been published. *On England* and *Our Inheritance* are volumes of his non-political speeches. The present address was delivered on 27th September, 1923. It reveals a ripe understanding and a rare love of learning. It eschews the tricks of the rhetorician, and deals with things in a tone of reality. The language is thoughtful and impressive ; it is also biblical in phrase and allusion, as, for instance in " It is the grain of mustard seed ;" " generations yet unborn may arise and call him blessed ;" " the last state of that community may be worse than the first ;" " the salt that savours the whole life of the community."

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PAGE 148. *It did not originate.....Whitehall*, all these movements were not officially started but were due to private initiative, to voluntary effort. The Franciscans, however, did come from Rome in the sense that their order had to be approved and was approved by the Pope in 1223, whereas the Salvationists are an independent congregation, not under the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Primate of England and the head of the Church of England.

PAGE 150. *From the right.....Centre*, from the Conservatives or from the Radicals or from the Moderates.

PAGE 151. *Quackish fungoids*, growths of ignorant pretenders to knowledge.

PAGE 152. *East wind*, is a pestilential wind.

Syndicalism, the control of industry by syndicates or workers, thus eliminating the capitalist. It originated in France.

PAGE 153. *Froude*, James Anthony (1818—94), historian. His greatest work in his *History of England from the Fall of Wolsey to the Spanish Armada* and the most popular of all *Short Studies on Great Subjects*.

PAGE 155. *Imperial Conference*, meeting of representatives of the various self-governing parts of the British Empire.

Mr. Bonar Law, British politician. The general election of 1922 resulted in a Unionist victory and, as a leader of that party, Bonar Law became Prime Minister but resigned in the following May. He died October 30, 1923.

MENTAL STOCKTAKING.

Arnold Bennett (1867—1931) was born near Hanley, the "Hanbridge" of the Five Towns which his novels were to render famous. After some adventures in journalism, he worked at 21 as a solicitor's clerk in London. But soon, finding that he could write, he determined to adopt the vocation of letters. He published his first novel *A Man from the North* when he was 31. In the ten years that had elapsed, Bennett had risen to be a successful "editor, novelist, dramatist, critic, connoisseur of all arts." In 1902 he made a name with *Anna of the Five Towns* and followed this

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up with *A Great Man*, *The Old Wives' Tale* and the trilogy—*Hilda Lessways*, *Clayhanger* and *These Twain*. Other successes came thereafter. He wrote also short stories and plays. Of the latter, *Milestones* for which E. Knoblauch was jointly responsible and *The Great Adventure* are well known. A man of business, he published "pot-boilers," some of which he classed under "Belles-Lettres,"—*How to Live on Twenty-Sous a Day*, *The Reasonable Life*, *Friendship and Happiness*, *The Married Life*, etc.

PAGE 159. *Soporifics*, drugs tending to produce sleep.

PAGE 160. *Porson*, one of the leading Greek scholars of the latter half of the 18th century.

Sainte Beuve, the 19th century French literary critic.

PAGE 161. *Shakespeare's terrific shout*, Sonnet No. XXXIII.
Dewar's the famous distillers.

Casaubon, French scholar of the 16th century. He edited several of the classical authors.

Marcus Aurelius, (121—180), the *Meditations* of the Roman philosopher-king.

Whitman, Walt (1819—92), American poet, author of *Leaves of Grass*.

PAGE 162. *A.V.*, Authorised Version or the English translation of the Bible prepared in the reign of James I and issued in 1611.

Apocrypha, religious writings that are not found in the ordinary English Protestant translations of the Bible, though they were bound up at one time with the A. V.

PAGE 165. *Sibthorpia europæa*, a dainty little plant found on river banks in the west of England. It bears very small, pale-coloured flowers in late summer.

Andromeda.....*Scorpion*, names of the constellations.

Venus, the planet.

PAGE 166. *Spencer's*, Herbert Spencer (1820-1903), one of the greatest English philosophers. He expounded his philosophy, based on the principle that "all organic development is a change from homogeneity to heterogeneity," in several books beginning with *First Principles*.

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CHARLES DICKENS.

Gilbert Keith Chesterton (1874-1937) was a voluminous writer on literary, social and religious topics. His works may be classified as Criticism—*Browning*; *Charles Dickens*; *George Bernard Shaw*; *C. F. Watts*; *The Victorian Age in Literature*; *Chaucer*. Essays—*All Things Considered*; *Tremendous Trifles*; *Alarms and Discursions*; *Uses of Diversity*, etc.; History—*The Crimes of England*; *The Barbarism of Berlin*; *A Short History of England*; Verse—*The Wild Knight and other Poems*; *The Ballad of the White Horse*; Poems—*Wine Water and Song*; Stories—*Napoleon of Notting Hill*; *The Club of Queer Trades*; *The Man who was Thursday*; *The Flying Inn*; *The Innocence of Father Brown* etc.; Plays—*Magic*; Travel—*The New Jerusalem*; Journalism—articles to the *Illustrated London News*, *The New Witness* and *G. K's Weekly*; Religious Controversy—*Heretics*; *Orthodoxy*, *The Everlasting Man*. Chesterton held decided views which are eminently sane and wise, and he expressed them in a highly arresting and challenging style.

PAGE 168. *Meredith or Browning*. The Victorian novelist and the Victorian poet, both highly intellectual.

The Great Exhibition, held in 1851, the high-water mark of Victorian peace, progress and prosperity.

Smollett (1712—71), wrote *Roderick Random*, *The Adventures of Peregrine Pickle*, *The Expedition of Humphrey Clinker*.

Fielding, (1707—54), one of the greatest English novelists, author of *Joseph Andrews*, *Tom Jones*, *Amelia*.

Albertian. From Albert, the Prince Consort and husband of Queen Victoria.

Gilray, (1757—1815), a caricaturist.

Rowlandson, (1756—1827), an artist who painted landscapes and portraits but his enduring fame rests on his caricatures.

Du Maurier (1834—96), British artist and author. He was a member of the staff of *Punch* and his pictorial satires of social life were for years a feature of that paper.

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Keene (1823-91), chiefly known for his excellent drawings contributed to *Punch*.

PAGE 169. *Micawber*, from *David Copperfield*, a confirmed optimist, always expecting for something to turn up though he fails in every enterprise.

PAGE 170. *The Nimrod Club*, a hunting club, named after Nimrod, mentioned in the Bible as a mighty hunter.

That year of Prussian victory, at Sedan (1870) in the Franco-Prussian war.

PAGE 171. *Samuel Weller*, the resourceful and witty personal servant of Mr. Pickwick.

Wat Tyler, leader of the English Peasants' Revolt in 1381.

William Tell, the Swiss patriot of the 14th century.

PAGE 173. *Pegotty*, devoted nurse to David Copperfield and sister of the Yarmouth fisherman, Daniel Pegotty. She marries Barkis.

Meg Merrilees, a mad fortune-teller in Scott's *Guy Mannering*.

Mrs. Wilfer, in *Our Mutual Friend*.

PAGE 174. *Serjeant Buzfuz's speech*, during the trial of Bardell vs. Pickwick in *The Pickwick Papers*, ch. XXXIV.

PAGE 177. *Mr. Tupman*, "the too susceptible Tupman," Mr. Pickwick's companion.

Supers, supernumerary actors.

PAGE 178. *Richard Swiveller*, dissipated young law apprentice in *The Old Curiosity Shop*.

Valentine's Day, 14th February, on which day according to ancient custom valentines or love tokens are sent to persons of opposite sex. The reference is to *The Pickwick Papers*, ch. XXXIII, where Sam Weller pens a love-letter to send it as a valentine.

Mrs. Gamp's profession, the profession of a nurse. Mrs. Gamp is a large and garrulous nurse in *Martin Chuzzlewit*.

Gusto, zest with which something is done.

PAGE 179. *Mr. Gradgrind*, a cool, calculating, hard-hearted

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owner of a hardware shop in *Hard Times*.

Mr. Honeythunder, the sectarian philanthropist satirised in *Edwin Drood*.

Mr. Scrooge, the miser who is suddenly converted in *Christmas Carol*.

THE PLACE OF ENGLISH LITERATURE

Dr. R. K. Jayakar is a lawyer and a scholar-publicist. After taking the M. A. Degree, he started together with a friend a school under the auspices of a society now known as the Aryan Education Society. Later on he was called to the Bar and in 1906 began practice at the Bombay High Court. In 1916 he took to public life. In 1923 he was elected to the Bombay Legislative Council by the Registered Graduates Constituency and became the leader of the Swarajist party in that Council till his resignation in 1925. The next year he entered the Legislative Assembly as a member for the Bombay City and continued as such till the end of March, 1930. Leader of the Opposition at the Simla sessions of the Assembly, he went as a delegate to the Round Table Conference, London; he was a member of the Federal Structure Committee and of the Indian delegation cooperating with the Joint Parliamentary Committee on the White Paper. In 1937 he was created a Judge of the Federal Court. He is a reputed scholar of Sanskrit and has edited a book on Vedanta philosophy. Only recently the Oxford University conferred on him the degree of D. C. L. He is now a member of the King's Privy Council, and a judge of that final Court of Appeal.

PAGE 180. *The Right.....Sastri*, the well-known Liberal statesman, member and President of the Servants of India Society.

PAGE 181. *Mathematician*, Principal Mahajani of the Fergusson College.

Bacon, whose *Essays* and *The Advancement of Learning* used to be regular text books in those days.

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PAGE 183. *Race complex*, race bias ; the sense of superiority or inferiority. It is a term of psycho-analysis which implies the reaction of suppressed instincts.

PAGE 184. *Morley*, the great Victorian statesman, a disciple of Mill and a staunch exponent of Victorian Liberalism. In public life he came to be known as Honest John. He is the joint author of the Indian Reforms of 1910. He wrote several books of first-rate excellence.

Wordsworth, the poet and critic of life with his powerful use of ideas "on man, on nature, and on human life."

PAGE 185. *Mimamsa*, a branch of Sanskrit philosophical literature belonging to the pre-Upanishad and Vedantic periods. The word really means commentary or criticism. The Mimamsa literature arose out of the exposition of *Sutras* and the texts of Budarayana and other writers.

PAGE 186. *Dryden*, the great poet of the Restoration period. His poem "*Annus Mirabilis*" or the Year of Wonders, 1666, deals with the encounters between the English and Dutch fleets, and then with the Great Fire.

"*Childe Harold*," *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, (1812-18), an account in verse of Byron's long journey to the Near East and to the continent with his musings. Its success was extraordinary and parts of it are just as famous to-day—the Waterloo stanzas, the address to the Ocean, the descriptions of Venice, of the Alpine storm, of the Coliseum and the Dying Gladiator.

PAGE 187. *Dean Swift*, Jonathan Swift (1667-1754), Dean of St. Patrick's, Dublin one of the greatest satirists, author of *The Battle of the Books*, *A Tale of a Tub*, *Gulliver's Travels*. The reference is to his *Drapier's Letters* by means of which he fanned to fever-heat the anti-English feeling of the Irish when Walpole sought to restore the Irish coinage.

PAGE 188. *Decshabille*, undress ; without any reserve.
Masefield, the present Poet Laureate, dramatist and novelist.

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PAGE 189. *Haldane*, Viscount, (1826-1928) statesman, lawyer and philosopher. He was twice Lord Chancellor.

Halsbury, Earl of (1823-1921), lawyer; he was twice Lord Chancellor. He edited *The Encyclopaedia of the Laws of England*.

Buckmaster, Lord (1861-1934), lawyer. He became Lord Chancellor in 1915.

PAGE 190. *J. A. Froude*, the 19th century historian distinguished for his prose style but unfortunately carried away by his partisan spirit.

Leslie Stephen, (1829-1904), author of *The Science of Ethics*, *An Agnostic's Apology*, *The English Utilitarians*, *Hours in a Library* and several biographies in the *English Men of Letters* series. He edited besides reviews, the *Dictionary of National Biography*. He was knighted in 1902.

Frederic Harrison, (1831-1923), scholar and founder of the Positivist movement in England. He was also a barrister and from 1877-89 was Professor of Jurisprudence at the Inns of Court, London. But he is chiefly known as a graceful and vigorous writer on a wide variety of subjects.

PAGE 191. *Gardiner*, A. G., editor of the *Daily News* from 1902 to 1919 and author of the popular volumes, *Prophets, Priests and Kings*, *Pillars of Society*, *War Lords*, and the essays which he wrote under the nom-de-plume of Alpha of the Plough, *Leaves in the Wind*, *Pebbles on the Shore*, *Many Furrows*.

Brougham, Lord (1778-1868), lawyer and politician. He was responsible for important legal reforms; in 1830 he was made Lord Chancellor. He wrote many books.

Lord Reading, lawyer and statesman. He rose to be Lord Chief Justice of England and was Viceroy of India from 1921 to 1926.

PAGE 192. *The blue ribbon*, the greatest honour.
Sir Surendranath Bannerji, one of the first generation of

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Indian politicians. He was the founder-editor of *The Bengali*, a newspaper, and a renowned orator.

PAGE 193. **सव्यसाची** (savyasachi), expert in doing a thing with both the hands. Arjuna is so called in the *Mahabharata* because he wielded his bow and arrow equally well with both hands.

PAGE 195. *The Mahabharat and Ramayan*, the ancient Indian epics dealing, the first, with the conflict between Kurus, spirit of evil, and Pandus, spirit of good, the second with the life story of Rama.

Dasa-Bodha, a poem in 20 chapters written by Ramdas, the guru of Shivaji and one of the saints of Maharashtra.

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE INTELLECTUALS.

Radhakrishnan Sir S. (1888—) is a philosopher and a savant of international fame. Educated at the Christian College, Madras, he became Professor of Philosophy successively at the Presidency College, Madras, Mysore University and the Calcutta University. He was appointed Upton Lecturer in Comparative Religion at the Manchester College, Oxford, and Hibbert Lecturer for 1929—30. He is the Vice-Chancellor of the Andhra University and the Spalding Professor of Philosophy at the Oxford University. He also holds office as an Indian member of the International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation of the League of Nations. He has written largely on philosophical subjects, his chief works being, *Indian Philosophy*, *The Hindu View of Life*, *The Philosophy of Rabindranath Tagore*, *Kalke or the Future of Civilization*, *East and West in Religion*.

PAGE 197. Sir Edward Grey, afterwards Lord Grey of Falloden, was then the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in the Asquith Ministry.

PAGE 199. *Thermopylae*, the *Hot Gates* or the *Gates*, a pass in Northern Greece, especially celebrated on account of the heroic

GLEANINGS FROM ENGLISH PROSE

defence of Leonidas and 300 Spartans against the mighty host of Xerxes in 480 B. C.

Garibaldi (1807—82), one of the leaders in the Italian movement of Unification and Liberation from the yoke of Austria. In 1860 with a small army of volunteers he won a victory at Palermo over the Sicilians and then captured Neapolitan territory, thus helping Victor Emmanuel to become the first King of United Italy.

The Serpentine, the artificial sheet of water in Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, London.

PAGE 200. *Rothermere Press*, the newspapers, the chief of which is *The Daily Mail*, owned and run by Viscount Rothermere (1868—). 1940

PAGE 202. *Techniques*, ways and means in realising those ambitions.

PAGE 203. *The logic of history*, the working of cause and effect in the evolution of events. History is not mere blind chance, but a concatenation of events with a definite and inevitable sequence.

To win the rubber, to score a victory. Rubber is three successive games between the same sides or persons at whist or bridge, cribbage etc.

Subliminal, latent. It is a term of new psychology, which implies the deposit below the normal working of our consciousness, of all feelings, thoughts and impressions, and the cumulative effect of these latent forces upon our character and conduct.

